No. 25 July-September 1958

SOVIET SURVEY

A Quarterly Review of Cultural Trends

EASTERN EUROPE

THE SILENT WRITERS OF HUNGARY
Vincent Savarius

THE POLISH COUNTRYSIDE
A. A. Rozental

CLIO IN BUCHAREST
Daniel Norman

Cartoons: MOSCOW—WARSAW—PRAGUE
Karel Brusak

THREE SHILLINGS

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UNDER FIRE

Comments on Western authors in the Soviet press

H. B. Acton

'The more that scientific socialism and the materialist conception of history are confirmed, the sharper grows the campaign of the ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie against socialism. Almost every month there appear in the United States, England, France, and other capitalist countries more and more new books, whose authors loudly disprove historical materialism. Among these extremely ignorant, superficial, but very pretentious books is *Illusion of an Epoch*, by H. B. Acton . . . Acton, while having a primitive notion of the relationship between historical materialism and the materialist conception of nature, has not understood the main theoretical propositions of the teachings he has taken upon himself to criticise . . .' (*Vestnik Moskovskovo Universiteta*, 1958, 1).

Evelyn Waugh

' "Cynicism camouflaged as freedom, as the search for total freedom, carries its most vile mark," wrote Gorky. A recent book by Evelyn Waugh, indeed his whole literary career, can serve as an illustration of this remark . . . *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* is a story about those social and moral trials which are part of the fate of an artist in capitalist countries; but the heart-searchings of Mr. Pinfold have nothing in common with those hopes and fears which any honest writer must feel about the destiny of his country and his people, and about the fate of humanity. . . Evelyn Waugh, like Gilbert Pinfold, is a professional writer . . . With a wide gesture he splashes out buckets of filth at the feet of his readers. All the dirt and mud accumulated in the sick consciousness of his "hero" comes to the surface and overflows. Sadistic nightmares and indecent erotical scenes, vulgar and abusive gutter language, including anti-Soviet attacks . . . what can be more "free" and "irresponsible" than the ravings of a drunkard who has lost his head? The author hastens to exploit all the doubtful advantages of this situation, stunning the reader with loathsome details more often met in American comics than in an English novel . . . Freedom for cynical sneering, freedom to deride impudently all human values, including art itself, that is what this celebrated "freedom" of the writer from civic duties amounts to. . .' (*Inostrannaya Literatura*, 1958, 5).

Karl Popper

'When arguing with Marxists, Popper often declares that his objections are based on experience and observation. However, the experience of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies has been omitted from his sphere of observation. If Popper had really observed events in the socialist countries he would undoubtedly see that after the victory of the socialist revolution class solidarity does not disappear but grows stronger and is transformed into the moral and political unity of the people . . . Popper comes out as a preacher of the favourite anti-marxist thesis, widely spread by bourgeois propaganda, of the existence of an exploiting class in socialist society. His line of argument is based on jugglery and on his absolute ignorance of Marxism and of the situation in socialist countries . . . An apologia for the capitalist social-economic system is also apparent in Popper's book, when he admits the undesirable influence of Marxist ideas on the workers. This is what frightens him most. His hypocritical pronouncements about the correctness of many propositions of Marxist sociology, about the sincere tendency in Marx to help the downtrodden working class, are now forgotten . . . To talk about the fictitious rights of the workers, and to pass over in silence the fact that the workers are deprived of the possibility of using them, is to base the arguments against Marxism on a deliberate lie . . .' (*Voprosy Filosofii*, 1958, 3).

Antonio Messineo and Isaac Deutscher

'The arguments of contemporary critics of Marxism and communism are in many respects drawn from Trotskyist literature. The attacks on communism of a contemporary representative of clerical obscurantism, Antonio Messineo, bear a striking likeness to the opinions of Isaac Deutscher, a Trotskyist and a renegade . . .' (*Voprosy Filosofii*, 1958, 5).

Joan Robinson, Edward Chamberlain, et al.

'The revisionists attribute to capitalism a new character, using for this purpose the theories of bourgeois capitalists, and in particular the myth about "people's capitalism" worked out in the United States by the economists J. Stigler,

(*Continued on page three of cover*)

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Editor : *Walter Z. Laqueur*

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Editorial

DIALOGUE ON THE EAST

Contemporary Historian: As in 1956, Eastern Europe and the Middle East are in the headlines again. The hardening of the Party line has been marked by a new quarrel with Yugoslavia and the execution of Nagy. The perspective is still too short and we have too little evidence about what has been happening behind the scenes to analyse adequately the possible historical significance of these events. Too many pieces of the puzzle are missing.

Kremlinologist: The behaviour of the press in the Communist world during these last months was curious. First, there were differences in emphasis and formulation among the members of the bloc in their attitude towards Tito. The spectrum ranged from Special Vituperation in the Chinese press, through Hereditary Hatred in the Albanian and Bulgarian, the Venomous Statesmanship in the Soviet and Czechoslovak, the Cautious Repetition in the Rumanian and Hungarian, to the Unhappy Hesitation of the Polish press. Second, there were changes in the consecutive formulations of some of the participants, and not all of them seemed consistent. Can a comparison of these ideological pronouncements explain the issues at stake? Can one distinguish between the immediate causes which precipitated the quarrel and the more basic reasons?

C.H.: In 1948, Tito was accused of ideological deviations which were mutually inconsistent; reluctantly he began to develop an ideology of his own. Now he is attacked for the seven deadly sins of revisionism, but again his primary offence is his reluctance to submit to control from Moscow. In 1948, on the ideological plane, the Yugoslav Communists were not in principle against the incorporation of Yugoslavia into the Soviet Union; on the practical plane they would not agree to have the security police controlled from outside. Today, while willing to go very far to conciliate Moscow on questions of ideology and foreign policy, they refuse to take the final and most important step of submitting to the internal discipline of the bloc. Tito's refusal to go to Moscow and sign the 12 Parties' declaration sealed the failure of the attempt to re-unify the Communist church. The question of internal divergences on the 'ways to socialism' was not the main obstacle. The requirements of 'proletarian internationalism' confronted Tito with the demand to abandon sovereignty in his foreign policy. In the course of time this might very well have led also to a lesser or greater loss of control over internal policy.

K.: In January, 1958, the Yugoslav Party was asked to submit the preliminary draft of their new programme for comment by the 'fraternal parties.' This they refused to do, regarding it as interference in their internal affairs. The programme was published in March. Considering its 'revisionist' character, did they expect that a break could be avoided?

C.H.: They were ready to modify the programme but not to relinquish sovereignty. In 1948, returning to the fold would have meant complete submission. This time it would have meant the acceptance of the milder discipline of the reunified bloc. But even so, it would have implied that the power of ultimate decision rests in Moscow, according to the old formula, revived by Pospelov, about the necessity of subordinating sectional to general Communist interests, and thus to the Soviet leadership which possesses the greatest experience in revolutionary struggle and is destined to lead the movement at the present historical stage. It is clear that 'at the present stage' this requires both the reconsolidation of the bloc and the strengthening of political control at the centre. Inside the Soviet Union some diffusion of economic power makes the further strengthening of Party control necessary; outside, the post-Stalin satellite deviations from the Soviet model made central control of the movement and the empire both more difficult and more urgent. The consolidation of Party rule in the Soviet Union, with its corollary of an end to 'collective leadership,' put on the agenda the reconsolidation of the bloc after the slow recovery from the consequences of 1956. The legitimation of ideological independence presented the same danger as had

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troubled Stalin in 1948. Even more, it was a real obstacle in the struggle against the 'revisionist' heresy. So long as Tito was not excommunicated, the revisionists inside the bloc could find legitimate ideological weapons in the Titoist armoury. But only reforms from above are orthodox, others are by definition revisionist.

K.: During the last five years Soviet foreign policy has been to woo the uncommitted countries and to encourage and exploit neutralism. Although Khrushchev's penitential voyage to Belgrade in 1955 did not achieve its final purpose, it nevertheless brought Tito considerably nearer.

C.H.: Good relations with an *independent* Tito are not an unmixed blessing. Some of the benefits of the 'offensive of smiles' may be lost, but not many elements of the Bandung-Cairo policy will be affected. The Middle Eastern crisis soon obliterated the memory of Nagy's execution, of which the repercussions in the undeveloped countries may have been dismissed in advance by the practitioners of *Realpolitik*. Its didactic effect inside the Soviet bloc must have been considered more important. The decision was postponed not because of its possible harmful effect on neutralist consciences, but because the issue of Yugoslavia's return to the fold still hung in the balance. And how were the two events reflected in the Communist press?

K.: First came the article in *Kommunist* (No. 6) criticising the draft programme. It was still comradely in tone and even contained an admission that the programme was partly correct. Then came the boycott of the Yugoslav Party Congress (adopted by the Poles with reluctance), and finally a concerted attack which began with an article in the Albanian *Zori i Popullit* on 4 May. *Pravda* then began to publish a series of attacks on Tito, regularly reprinting for over a month editorial articles from other Communist organs: *Scinteia*, *Rude Pravo*, *Rabotnicheskoe Delo*, *Neues Deutscland*, etc. It gave the Soviet public, accustomed to reading between the lines, a chance to observe the variations of emphasis in these different criticisms. *Pravda* began by reprinting (three days before its own editorial) a violent article from *Jen Min Jih Pao* of 5 May. It condemned the Yugoslav programme as 'anti-Marxist' and 'out-and-out revisionist,' designed to induce the working class to surrender to capitalism. It also stated that the 1948 Cominform resolution was 'basically correct' and it did not refer to the Yugoslav leaders as 'comrades.' The differences in the nuances of style of the satellite editorials could hardly indicate divergent attitudes; but there were two exceptions, on 21 May *Pravda* reprinted an editorial from *Trybuna Ludu* and on 15 and 16 June from *Nepszabadsag*.

At first *Trybuna Ludu* gave publicity to both sides of the dispute. During the Yugoslav Party Congress (on 23 April) its editorial ostensibly criticised the Yugoslav 'comrades,' while patting them on the back and regretting the quarrel. Gradually, however, it modified its position. Even so, the article reproduced in *Pravda* still differed in tone from the others. Its reference to the 1948 resolution implied the opposite to the Chinese one: 'In 1948, a period of severe trials began for the Yugoslav Party, a period of unjust isolation from the international Communist movement. But in this particularly difficult period they were able to safeguard the socialist character of their state.' In the Chinese press the Yugoslav leaders had already become a 'ruling clique'; in the Polish they were still called 'comrades.'

The article from *Nepszabadsag* also contained some arresting formulations, including a warning that 'nobody should doubt that the Yugoslav League of Communists is a party which, though with errors, is constructing socialism in Yugoslavia.' It appeared in *Pravda* one day before that paper published the communiqué about the execution of Nagy.

In Poland this event caused a mixture of acute anxiety and horror among the population generally, and consternation among the Party leaders. Feelings ran high. Discreet gestures expressed the popular feeling. The Polish radio unexpectedly put Chopin's Funeral March in one of its broadcasts. The writers at their meeting in Warsaw stood in a minute's silence in memory of Nagy. The only remaining representative of the Party in the Presidium of the Writers' Union, Julian Przybos, resigned from the Party. The press was almost silent. *Trybuna Ludu* printed the Hungarian communiqué on its fourth page, but refrained from comment. Other papers, like the popular *Zycie Warszawy*, printed only short and inconspicuous notices of the execution.

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Some Polish ministers tried to dissociate Gomulka from the act. Rapacki said, at the factory in Poznan where the riots began two years before, that Gomulka was not informed about the impending trial. A circular letter on the same lines was distributed to Party organisations and persistent well-informed rumour attributed to Gomulka a letter of protest to Khrushchev. But on 25 June *Trybuna Ludu* reproduced the *Pravda* article reviling the dead Hungarian leaders and commending Nagy's execution. It omitted only the most extreme passages, such as the one saying that 'public opinion in the socialist countries endorses the verdicts on the traitors to the Hungarian people.' It also replaced the more abusive descriptions of the condemned by the neutral term 'Nagy and his group.' On 28 June Gomulka attacked the Yugoslav Communists in much stronger terms than before and made an acrobatic turn, implying, without saying so explicitly, that the Party had not concerned itself with the executions, and denying that any letters on this question had been sent either to party members or to Khrushchev. While refusing to comment on the 'severe sentence passed on Nagy, which is an internal affair of Hungary,' he censured him for his part during the 'counter-revolution.' *Pravda* promptly reproduced the full text of the speech.

Other reactions in the Communist press were fairly monotonous. The Chinese were 'glad at the news.' Sofia radio used Vyshinski's formula: 'The dog had a dog's death.' *Pravda* reprinted a resolution, attributed to the Csepel steel workers, condemning Nagy in terms identical with those used in the resolution adopted in the name of the same proletarian stronghold (which took such an active part in the 'counter-revolution') after the trial of Rajk in 1949. There was little difference between the Soviet and Chinese tone on the Nagy affair. *Pravda* reprinted the most vituperative Chinese articles and speeches referring to the 'traitorous clique of Nagy and his accomplices,' having itself described him in identical terms. But one could discern some differences on the Yugoslav issue. There was a certain reserve in the tenor of Soviet pronouncements; they were at first more reluctant, the subsequent formulas of condemnation being adopted only after the Chinese had already used them. Moreover, the Soviet moves towards stronger criticism were accompanied by certain gestures creating the impression that Moscow was being prompted. The boycott of the Yugoslav Congress was followed by conciliatory pronouncements by Furtseva and by birthday greetings from Khrushchev to Tito; the suspension of credits to Yugoslavia by suggestions that they might be replaced by a trade deal. *Pravda* stressed that the 'ideological' dispute did not involve relations on the state level, a formula endorsed by the Chinese with some reluctance, and accompanied by discourteous treatment of the Yugoslav ambassador in Peking.

At the Bulgarian Party Congress Khrushchev endorsed the Chinese statement about the 'basic correctness' of the 1948 Cominform resolution, while preserving the face-saving qualification that its implementation was 'accompanied by mistakes.' He elaborated this in his speech to the Fifth Congress of the SED, again castigating 'the Trojan horse within the workers' movement,' the Yugoslav leaders who 'have taken an openly schismatic, revisionist line, and are thus helping the enemies of the working class . . . the imperialists, in their struggle against the Communist parties.' Soviet doctrinal criticism of Yugoslav deviations, he asserted, had been consistent and unbroken:

> In 1948 our parties criticised the opportunist and nationalist errors of the Yugoslav leadership. It was not our criticism, from which we have never deviated, that was incorrect, but the demand for a change in the leadership of the Yugoslav C.P.

While admitting that 'errors were committed on both sides,' as a result of which 'bad relations between the parties were carried over to the sphere of state relations,' Khrushchev complained that this frank self-criticism had not been matched by the Yugoslavs.

The slightly apologetic tone of this attack was in marked contrast to the language used by the Chinese Communists, who continued to talk about 'the traitors to the working class . . . the ruling clique of Yugoslavia,' on whom 'the American imperialists have spent a great deal of money to buy them out.' Khrushchev still prefixed the word 'comrade' to Tito, and even complained that 'in Yugoslavia the word "comrade" is used less and less when reference is made to our parties.' That did not prevent him

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on another occasion, from calling the Yugoslav leaders 'bandits.' The epithet may well have been used in response to Tito's wooing of Nasser, about which Khalid Bakdash, the leader of the Syrian Communist party, at present in exile, said:

> It is time for world public opinion to take notice of the activities of the Yugoslav revisionists in the Arab East. The envoys of the Belgrade revisionist clique have sought not merely to isolate and disunite the Arab Communist movement, to dissuade the National Liberation movement from fighting its natural enemy, imperialism; they have also tried to destroy the friendship between the Arab peoples and the Soviet Union.

However, on 20 July 1958, *Pravda* reported the Yugoslav warning against intervention in Iraq. Middle Eastern developments, which brought Nasser on a hurried visit to Moscow after his meeting with Tito, temporarily overshadowed the crisis in Eastern Europe.

C.H.: The practical significance of Khrushchev's distinction between party relations and state relations, and his admission that only 'the leadership of each Party, the leadership of each state is fully competent' to judge and correct its own errors, derives from Tito's successful resistance and from Soviet preoccupation with other international issues, rather than from the sanctimonious formula itself. Khrushchev, like all his predecessors, maintained that 'we stand for the non-interference of one state in the affairs of another state,' and also extend this principle to the relations between Parties. But, judging by the past, there is even less likelihood that non-intervention in other Parties will be better observed than non-intervention in other states. The separation of the two is difficult to maintain as an operational rule, since state relations as a separate compartment of policy is singularly unreal for party-states. A similar fictitious distinction has run through the history of Soviet foreign policy, concerning the relation of the Soviet government to the Comintern, Cominform, and the Communist parties in general. This is the first time that the fiction involves a Communist state. To maintain this fiction, it was necessary to make an equally unreal distinction between the 'correct' 1948 Cominform resolution and its mistaken implementation on the state level.

There is a curious parallel on the other side. Tito justified the 'second' Soviet intervention in Hungary, but not the 'first.' Perhaps, from the Titoist point of view, it is not so illogical as it seems. After all, the 'second' Soviet intervention came when the one-party system ceased to exist. Tito's stand on various issues since 1955 has been an example of *Realpolitik* rather than realism. In June, 1956, he expressed his conviction that 'there will never again be a misunderstanding' with his Soviet hosts in Moscow. It was Tito himself who endorsed the Gero régime after the talks with Khrushchev in the Crimea and invited the Hungarian to Belgrade; and it was the self-assured Gero's speech after his return from Belgrade which sparked off the revolution in Hungary. In surrendering Nagy from his asylum in the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest against the Soviet safe-conduct, Tito was more concerned with an insurance for himself than for Nagy and his followers. As long as he believed that he could have his cake and eat it, Tito was ready to go to great lengths to placate the Soviet leaders. The sentence on Djilas was increased in order to find merit with them. Official recognition of East Germany did not avert the split, but led to the suspension of diplomatic relations with West Germany.

K.: Why were the Chinese Communists the most vehement in the attack on Yugoslavia?

C.H.: They show the greatest concern about the unity of the bloc, which for them means practically the Moscow-Peking axis. They might have discovered that they could not afford to play Eastern European countries against Russia, just as they discovered that they could not afford the '100 flowers' policy. As long as China is industrially undeveloped and depends on Soviet capital imports, it cannot be indifferent to the undermining of the Soviet positions in Eastern Europe. On the contrary, it is at present vitally interested in their stability, both for state and party-ideological reasons.

K.: After Khrushchev's secret speech Peking showed its concern about the possible repercussions of 'destalinisation,' delaying its admission

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of Stalin's 'errors,' and then providing two programmatic documents ('On the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat' and 'Once again on the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat') to stabilise the situation.

Just as the Chinese leaders were reluctant to acknowledge Stalin's 'mistakes,' so now they are eager to condemn the 'Yugoslav revisionists' who 'are trying in every way to slander Stalin' (article from the theoretical organ of the CCP, reprinted in *Pravda*, 30 June, 1958). The theoretical premise for this is interesting:

> In his time Stalin considered the sharpening of the class struggle as the law of the transition period. It is easy to understand that such an assessment could be interpreted as the uninterrupted intensification of the class struggle and this had disadvantageous consequences for the cause of socialism. But this does not mean that in correcting this error we deny the existence of the class struggle in the transition period . . . On the question of the struggle between the two roads of development—the socialist and the capitalist—contradictions exist both between us and our enemies and within the country. Naturally, the class struggle in the transitional period gets sharper at times, while at others it relaxes and is conducted in a more tortuous way.

C.H.: Whenever there is a switch in Communist tactics, Western commentators renew the debate on whether the Communist threat is military or economic. In the era of the hydrogen bomb the question is unreal. The Soviet leaders are ready to use whatever means are most promising in a given situation; they do not oppose the economic to the military balance of power, but subordinate both to the political criteria of their total struggle. They are not averse to using military threats, as Suez and the present Middle Eastern crisis have amply demonstrated, but whether they are ready to implement them depends, as it does for other countries, on their assessment of the risks involved and the chances of success. That they can miscalculate was shown by Korea; that they can be cautious was illustrated by Persia, Berlin, and their behaviour in the Middle East in 1956 and at present. In each case it is the political evaluation of the situation which dictates the choice of means. Economic policy, too, has always been subordinated to political considerations.

K.: Khrushchev made this clear in his treatment of the question of Soviet credits to Yugoslavia. Speaking on 12 July 1958 about the withdrawal of Soviet credits from Yugoslavia, he said:

> It is well known to the Yugoslav side that the conditions on which they received the credits are very favourable for them and very unfavourable for us . . . We do not want to have agreements which are a burden on the Soviet economy and are beneficial to one side only . . . Even a marriage contract, which is regarded as sacred, has sometimes to be dissolved, if one party can prove that the other does not fulfil the matrimonial duties . . .

The political character of these 'matrimonial duties,' and the Soviet Union's readiness to make economic concessions only for political purposes, was clearly implied in Khrushchev's criticism of the Yugoslav leaders, particularly in his reference to their abandonment of the revolutionary Leninist position and their acceptance of the 'revisionist idea of the peaceful evolution of capitalism.' 'The Yugoslav programme,' he said in a speech at the SED Congress, 'is in essence only a worse variant of all the revisionist platforms constructed by the right-wing social-democrats.' The revolutionary stand of the Soviet leadership was thus again reasserted.

C.H.: In the case of the Chinese Communists there was even less time for revolutionary fervour to cool off. At present they are confronting different problems from those of the Soviet *apparatchiki*. They want quick industrialisation, and given the population problem, 'primitive accumulation' is difficult from internal resources only. Capital imports depend on the Soviet attitude and the stability of the bloc. Hence their willingness to accept Soviet leadership for the time being (in the formula: 'the Socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union') and their anxiety about anything which disrupts the unity of the bloc.

K.: The communiqué of the Comecon meeting at which a Chinese delegate participated referred to

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the goal of 'raising the level of industrialisation of the countries with less developed industry' within the bloc (*Pravda*, 25 May, 1958). This might require sacrifices by the members of the bloc in the interest not of their own industrialisation but of the Chinese; these they may be reluctant to undertake. But seen from Peking anything which increases difficulties in this respect is harmful. Political relaxation raises consumer pressure and disrupts the economic 'solidarity' of the bloc, which in turn affects the chances of Chinese industrialisation. The credits to other 'socialist countries' as well as those to undeveloped countries outside the bloc must be seen as competitive. Why should a heretic Tito, unwilling to join the camp, receive them when the faithful Chinese ally can make use of them? They might perhaps tend to identify their own interests with the interests of Communism as such. It is usual, as Sorel said, for revolutionaries to think their own interests and those of humanity identical. But that applies to the Soviet Communists as well. Why should they accept the Chinese point of view?

C.H.: They don't. And that might help to explain the lack of uniformity in the Communist press. But at present relations with China are most important for Soviet Russia and this requires some manœuvring. There are good historical reasons for Russia to watch with mixed feelings the rise of an industrial power on its Far Eastern frontier, although the divergences of interest can make themselves felt only in the long run.

K.: The course traced by Marxism is from the Western industrialised countries to the Eastern undeveloped ones; Mao recognises this when he says that 'the East wind now prevails over the West wind.' The Marxist revolutionary message has been spreading where there was favourable ground. But now Russia itself has been industrialised, while the Chinese have only just entered the Spartan phase of industrialisation.

C.H.: In future even greater difficulties may arise from the problem of reconciling the gradual *embourgeoisement* of Soviet society with the requirements of Chinese industrialisation in the global struggle for 'socialism.'

K.: Revolutionary strategy is designed to alter the balance of power in favour of the 'Socialist camp.' But because the camp now consists of many states, the indentification of Soviet interests with the interests of the camp becomes more difficult. It was easy to sacrifice the interests of the local Communist parties to the supreme interests of 'the fatherland of the toilers,' *i.e.* to subordinate them to Soviet foreign policy. It is more difficult to reconcile the interests of multiple fatherlands of the toilers when they all represent a 'socialist bastion' and are not wholly dominated by a single centre.

Yet if the internal problems became more complex, the change in the balance of power between the camps opened new prospects for the global struggle; this explains why the formula about 'capitalist encirclement' was abandoned. The Declaration of the 12 Parties again stressed the inevitability of a world revolutionary struggle between the two contending systems. It retained Khrushchev's covering formula about the possibility of the 'peaceful assumption of power by the working class,' but strongly emphasised that 'the bourgeoisie will not surrender its power without a struggle.' It drew the conclusion that revolutionary struggle is a necessity not only 'in some cases' but 'as a rule.'

C.H.: There may well be certain differences between the Russian and the Chinese application of strategy and tactics. Differences in their economic and geo-political position may account for this, but more immediate factors may have precipitated it. As Tito asserted in his Labin speech, the Chinese leaders (at first referred to anonymously as 'some leaders') have shown a reckless disregard for the risks of war. This may be connected not so much with a different assessment of nuclear risks, allegedly less for the Chinese, of whom '300 million will remain,' as with the question of the possession of the bomb, which confers great-power status. Reports that the Chinese leaders aspire to its possession do not seem implausible in the light of their own pronouncements. The suspension of Russian tests, on which, it is said, the Chinese leaders were not consulted, may well have aggravated the irritation caused by Soviet reluctance to provide their allies with fraternal help in this realm. Chinese acrimony in the Yugoslav dispute may

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well have reflected more than one sort of frustration. Nevertheless, although internal 'contradictions' within the bloc may exist, the strategic interests of the two ends of the Moscow-Peking axis coincide, and the Soviet leaders have received zealous support from Mao in their policy in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. In fact, the internal differences make solidarity vis-a-vis the 'imperialists' more imperative.

K.: Another factor affecting present revolutionary strategy is the assessment of the American recession. In May 1947 the then Director of the Institute of World Economy in Moscow, Eugene Varga, was criticised for his book *Changes in the Economy of Capitalism Resulting from the Second World War*. Among his many mistakes was his suggestion that an economic depression might not hit the post-war capitalist economy in the near future. Varga was reprimanded for 'inadequately appraising the general crisis of capitalism,' despite his contention that the capitalist economy was 'creating the prerequisites for a crisis of over-production.' In September 1947 the Cominform was established.

The present American recession has provided Soviet economists with fresh food for thought. Varga has published in *Kommunist* (1958, 8), a chapter from his forthcoming book, delivered as a lecture, in which he comes to the conclusion that this time 'there is no doubt that the present crisis in the United States is the beginning of a world crisis of over-production.' This thesis has again been the subject of a 'fundamental' discussion at a special meeting of the Soviet Academy of Sciences on 29 April 1958. In 1947 it was Varga who was castigated for his words of caution about the coming slump; now, when he had at last diagnosed the long-expected 'world crisis of over-production,' it was the turn of Ya. A. Kronrod, another economist who has shown 'revisionist' tendencies in the past, to utter a warning that 'it is necessary to be more cautious in formulating categorical assessments.' The present head of the Institute of World Economy, A. A. Arzumanyan, supported the Varga thesis. (He did so frankly before his bourgeois hosts when visiting London and Oxford.) The thesis has official blessing and has been accepted as the basis of the Party line. *Novoe Vremya* stated explicitly that 'the first cyclical post-war crisis in the capitalist world is in full swing.' Ponomarev in *Pravda* linked this with the revolutionary prospects which will inevitably open as the deepening crisis sharpens the class struggle. Hence, he said, it was essential to consolidate the Communist parties everywhere and to rid them of the 'revisionism' which would hamper the coming revolutionary struggle.

C.H.: This analysis had been formulated long before it finally crystallised in the Declaration of the 12 Parties. The attempt to found a new international journal propounding the correct, unitary line was frustrated in 1956 by the events in Eastern Europe. Now, at last, the new 'theoretical journal of information of the Communist and Workers' parties' will appear in Prague in August. Its title, *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, is an improvement on its predecessor, *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy* (devised by Stalin himself), but its function will be similar.

That does not mean, of course, that the situation is similar to the one in 1947 when Zhdanov launched the Cominform. Not only is each new reincarnation of Comintern made in a different international context, but the internal problems arising from the expansion and diffusion of Communist power, create new institutional headaches for the Communist leaders.

K.: One can observe how, within the logic of a one-party system, Communists are becoming more and more concerned with their own states rather than the movement as such. They behave as diplomats not only vis-a-vis their capitalist opponents but, increasingly, among themselves. It is easy to trace the evolution from the 'comradely frankness' of the early revolutionary period, through the institutionalised intrigues in the Comintern and the creeping *officialese* at the foundation meeting of the Cominform, to the present diplomatic jockeying in the relations of those Communist states which possess attributes of sovereignty.

C.H.: The process will continue. The relations between the parties were never very comradely either, and they are becoming more and more mixed with state relations. In future the Com-

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munists' *raisons d'état* may be even more difficult to reconcile with the *raison d'être* of the communist movement. The idea of a unified Communist world belongs to the same category as the dreams of universal empires in the past. When in 1945 Communist régimes were imposed on Eastern Europe, the problem arose of the nature of the relationship between the Communist states, but it was shelved for the time being. In his empire-building Stalin could not for tactical reasons incorporate them as Union republics, and the problem remained even though the satellites possessed only a nominal statehood. The emergence of Communist China underlined its reality. It is clear that the problem of relationships between sovereign Communist states does not differ in principle from that of their nature between any sovereign states; the cement of solidarity is very thin and relations may easily be strained. If anything, the dictatorial character of these states may only aggravate frictions arising from divergence of interests and from historical causes. The doctrinal legitimation of power in these states tends to transform all serious conflicts into 'theological' disputes. In the Communist states Marxism is a state religion and it is 'religious' conflicts which are most intense. So long as the 'capitalist environment' exists, the sources of tension between Communist states may be stifled in the interests of the struggle against the common enemy, but in the absence of such an enemy they may flare up with the intensity inherent in the doctrinal character of Communist régimes.

K.: Foreign policy does not always begin at home. And in the case of Tito it was the worsening of foreign relations which led to some internal relaxation. This was due to the existence of the 'other side.' It is interesting to note that in order to placate his Soviet friends, Gomulka, who is presumably aware from which direction the threat to his position comes, used an inverted argument:

> Yugoslavia does not belong and does not want to belong to the socialist camp, and yet —people say—the imperialists do not attack her and let her build socialism despite her isolation. The answer is simple. Yugoslavia, as a socialist country, can exist only because of the existence of the friendly partnership of the 12 socialist countries (*Trybuna Ludu*, 29 June, 1958).

For how long Gomulka will be able to avoid the rôle of Kadar or the fate of Nagy within the 'friendly partnership of the socialist countries' is, of course, anybody's guess. Communist methods of solving the problem of relations between their states are not in advance of those used elsewhere, as the names of Tito, Nagy, and Gomulka himself indicate. Whatever the temporary solution, the problem will not be exorcised. The conflicts within 'socialist society' are 'non-antagonistic' by definition, but in practice they have involved a lot of political suppression and terror. Conflicts between 'socialist states' may also be claimed as 'non-antagonistic' by definition, but in practice they lead to excommunication, economic sanctions and even military intervention.

C.H.: This has an important bearing on the problem of atomic security, which has recently been at the centre of attention in the West. Believers in political shortcuts, unilateral disarmament, etc., do not ask themselves what will happen once the Communists gain their objectives. In their perspective 'if the Communists conquered the world, it would be very unpleasant for a while, but not for ever,' as Earl Russell said. It is assumed that even if unilateral disarmament should lead to Communist world domination it would at least secure a peaceful world. But there is no such guarantee. The difficulties of 'peaceful coexistence' *within* the Communist part of the world bear eloquent testimony to this. The dilemma for Western countries is not between freedom and security, but between freedom with partial insecurity and totalitarian domination, which will not only extinguish freedom for a long time to come, but may also lead to even greater insecurity.

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Path of Disillusion

THE SILENT WRITERS OF HUNGARY

Vincent Savarius

THE execution of Imre Nagy marked the end of the ambivalent phase of the post-revolutionary Hungarian situation. With Nagy—the Communist party leader who had asked for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary —still alive, the Soviet intervention and its doctrinal premise about the counter-revolutionary nature of the uprising were in a sense left in mid-air. Nagy's death provides a symbolic consummation of the suppression of the 'counter-revolution' and a warning to all those still entertaining dangerous thoughts. An act which might have been expected long ago was committed only when the situation within and outside the Soviet bloc removed the inhibiting factors.

During this period Hungarian cultural policy has also been beset by the ambivalence inherent in the situation. The task of the party during the rebuilding of the 'proletarian dictatorship' was to win back the intellectuals who had revolted against it before October, and who have continued their passive resistance to it ever since.

Many changes have occurred since the uprising in the autumn of 1956. Factories are producing again, and ruined houses have been rebuilt; but the shaken faith, the solidarity the Communist party demands from its intellectuals, has not been restored. This lack of solidarity is the key to the attitude of the former communist writers and artists in Hungary.

This group had once constituted the regime's most important intellectual support. The emigrés who had returned from the USSR enthusiastically applauded every turn of the party line and unconditionally approved every order from above—and for that very reason were of little use to the party. The public did not read their articles because everybody knew what they would contain; their literary works were bought only by the libraries as a compulsory investment, especially since the returned emigré writers, Sandor Gergely, Emil Madarasz, Bela Illes, or the artist Sandor Ek, did not even approach the level of the average Hungarian writer or painter. Their artistic credit diminished with every book or article written, every canvas painted. Their fate was shared by the ultra-conformist writers who had never been to Moscow, such as Gyorgy Boloni, Laszlo Gereblyes, Aladar Tamas, Anna Balasz, and others. These, too, were always at the disposal of the party, and were likewise singularly ungifted.

The so-called peasant writers[1] were fellow-travellers, and the regime wooed them, as it did a number of outstanding independent writers, artists, and musicians. But it could never fully rely on their co-operation and always feared their influence.

In post-revolutionary Hungary the two ultra-conformist groups became even more depleted, some withdrawing into complete passivity. The others cannot be classified according to their past or present party membership, nor by whether they had been or still were fellow-travellers or had always kept their distance from the party and were still considered bourgeois writers. This sort of classification would be superficial and unrealistic. It would be much more to the point to speak, as we did in the days immediately following the revolution, of four kinds of writers in Hungary. There are those who dare write and those who do not dare, those who do not dare not to write and those who do dare not to write.

At the end of 1956 all writers opposed to the party had the courage not to write and the

[1] Peasant writers (*nepi irok*) are for the most part of peasant origin and regard the peasants as the vital force of the nation. They were hostile to what they called urban literature. In Horthy's time they demanded land reform, criticised the semi-feudal institutions of the country, and as nationalists were anti-German and in many cases anti-Semitic. During the German occupation they collaborated with the communists in the underground resistance movement. Many fellow-travellers came from their ranks.

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group loyal to Moscow still lacked the courage to write, and the party feared it would do more harm than good to rely on its intellectual servants to act as its mouthpiece. However, there were non-party writers who lacked the courage not to write, and there were a number of apprentice journalists and party officials whose literary or journalistic attempts had never yet been published because they did not reach even the modest requirements of a people's democracy. These wrote with enthusiasm. Thus the journalism of the first few months (the first literary weekly appeared only later) was in the main marked by extreme crudity.

AT the same time the plans drawn up by the publishing houses during the thaw before the revolution were left practically untouched. In Hungary the editing and printing of a book takes about a year. Translations are compared with the original by a supervisory editor, and original writings, with the exception of the works of a few authors, go through the hands of a re-write editor who makes them fit to print. Thus, had the government compelled the publishers to change their plans, no book would have appeared in Hungary for many long months. Yet, just because the writers kept silent, it seemed important to the party to create the impression of great activity and vitality in Hungarian literary life, so it was obliged to approve the publication of a number of Hungarian and foreign writers who had been banned before the thaw. Among the writers formerly blacklisted and now published were James Joyce, Somerset Maugham, and Franz Kafka. Anxious to stress its liberal attitude, the government also permitted the theatres to include in their repertories works by Western playwrights, as well as those of successful pre-war Hungarian writers such as Ferenc Molnar; the cinemas also put on Western and old Hungarian films. During this period only the classics of Russian literature were published; no Soviet plays were staged, and only very few Soviet films shown.

The same spirit was manifest in the preparations for the spring art exhibition of 1957. Artists could submit their works to four different juries, according to the style in which they painted. The party was trying to lure the writers and artists to its side; for the time being it did not demand solidarity, but was satisfied with a neutral attitude. It was not yet strong enough to launch an offensive, nor had the cultural-administrative machine been fully restored. What is more, an embittered struggle was still being waged within the party for cultural as well as political leadership between Kadar's followers and the old Stalinists. Jozsef Revai, Hungarian exponent of Zhdanovist cultural policies, was already back in Budapest. Arguments went on for weeks in the party as to whether Revai's article, 'Ideological purity', should be published in the party's official paper. In the end, for tactical reasons, Kadar decided that it should, hoping that public opinion would side with him against Revai and that the threat of a Stalinist restoration would also move the writers to back him. For this is what Revai wrote in *Nepszabadsag* (People's Freedom) of 7 March 1957:

> After the declarations made by the Chinese comrades and subsequently by Comrade Khrushchev, it is now clear to every communist that the world-wide campaign against Stalin and 'Stalinism' was only one manifestation, suited to the present situation, of . . . anti-communist instigation. Throughout the world the fight against 'Stalinism' has been only a cover for revisionism.

Among the initiated the struggle that preceded the publication of the Revai article was common knowledge, but the writers showed no inclination to support Kadar. They even refused to break their self-imposed silence. It took the government six weeks to make up its mind to strike the first blow. On Easter Sunday, 1957, it arrested Tibor Dery and dissolved the Writers' Association. This ended the first phase of the struggle between the writers and the party. The majority of writers, among them the most outstanding, still had the courage not to write, but the rank and file of the party's retainers had picked up sufficient courage—to write.

IN the second phase of the campaign, the replacement of the Writers' Association, the party appointed a Literary Council in which, although there were also a few non-party and

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fellow-travelling writers, it assured itself of a majority loyal to Moscow. Gyorgy Boloni was appointed chairman of the Council, and became editor-in-chief of the periodical *Elet es Irodalom* (Life and Literature). Realising that it could not count on the obedience of the oppositional writers although it was compelled to consider them negotiating parties, the party used its traditional methods to line up its unconditional supporters. It was prompted to this course for the further reason that the debate announced in *Elet es Irodalom,* initiated with the purpose of evolving some kind of *modus vivendi,* proved a complete failure. The writers who dared not to write did not take part in the debate.

Thereupon the party started negotiations. Kadar delegated Lajos Mesterhazy to hold conversations with several members of the presidium of the dissolved Writers' Association. Simultaneously—and probably on party initiative—rumours were spread in Hungary and abroad that Tibor Dery and his fellow-writers were being tried *in camera* and that a death sentence was expected. One of the demands of the writers was that the lives of Dery and the other writers imprisoned with him were to be spared; if any sentence was imposed it was to be a light one. The party's principal demand was that the writers should show their support of the government in some way. This was the origin of the protest of the Hungarian writers against the 'interference' of the UNO commission of enquiry into the Hungarian events, which was published in *Nepszabadsag* (5 September 1957). A stubborn fight was waged over every word of the circumspectly phrased declaration, but in the end the party had its way; adopting the Soviet point of view, the writers called the Hungarian revolution and the invasion of the Red Army an internal affair, but the party was unable to persuade the signatories of the protest to condemn either their imprisoned fellow writers or Imre Nagy; though negative, this was still an act of courage.

In the issue of the same newspaper for 27 September 1957 it was made clear that the signing of the protest did not mean that the writers had also changed their way of thinking. The article in question reassured Hungarian public opinion; the writers had not given up the fight, but had agreed to a compromise. Following on that compromise, they began to publish, but their writings were all of a completely non-political character. Now, as before, everything with a political tendency published in the press came from the dilettantes and the party hacks. Perhaps the only exception was a short story by the gifted young writer Laszlo Toth, which appeared in the literary periodical *Kortars* (Contemporary), first issued in the late summer of 1957.[2]

THE writers' hope that their compromise would bring a relaxation of persecution was disappointed. The government did not keep its word, imposing a heavy sentence on Dery and his associates, and the earlier attacks continued. Kalman Sandor, a well-known Stalinist, started a column entitled 'Smoking Vitriol,' in which he denounced the living and the dead, and Revai reappeared on the scene with strong attacks on the peasant writers. At the same time a campaign was launched against Gyorgy Lukacs, who had returned from his period of deportation in Rumania. Mesterhazy, who had hitherto enjoyed playing the mediator and angel of peace, wrote in *Nepszabadsag* (15 December 1957): 'Our defensive has now reached the point where it turns into a socialist cultural offensive.'

An article by Aron Tamasi, entitled 'Intellectual Honesty,' was characteristic of the writers' state of mind. It was his first article since the revolution, and was published in the Christmas issue of *Elet es Irodalom.* In muted tones but with great dignity Tamasi demanded freedom of criticism: 'If, in a dream and in the guise of a white angel, I could once appear before the government, I would tell them that the gifted mind and the true word are useful even

[2] The story is based on a real event. It deals with prisoners liberated by the revolution and a priest who refuses to leave his cell until his case is formally re-tried. An article published (4 December) in *Magyarorszag,* the paper of the Tancsios circle founded after the revolution as counterpart of the famous Petoefi circle, accused Toth of falsification and counter-revolutionary provocation. Another writer in the same issue reproached him for portraying the prisoners as lovable fellows and the guards as vile and brutal; Hungarian literature, he concluded, does not need writers like Laszlo Toth.

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if they carry critical remarks. This is particularly true in the realm of literature. It is true because, if no works are created, all cultural policy becomes empty. And works can be created only by talented writers—but in a restless atmosphere, in conditions of anxiety, not even by them.'

The offensive announced by the party did not make the writers abandon their position, nor was the party in fact united enough to launch it. It is a little known fact, but should be mentioned here, that Kadar, who was then Prime Minister and secretary of the party, and Gyula Kallai, then Minister for Culture, were unaware that the death sentence was to be pronounced on Gyula Obersovszky and Jozsef Gali. Such a state of affairs is highly unusual in the people's democracies, where sentences are decided on not by the courts but by the party. Behind the back of the responsible ministers, a small group of Stalinists had sent the case of the two writers to a court consisting of AVH men (State Security Branch, the Hungarian political police), and these were glad of the opportunity to take revenge. The two young writers were saved from death by protests from foreign countries and by the intervention of Kadar and Kallai, who first obtained a reprieve and then forced the Stalinists to retreat.

This did not mean that the two ministers objected to the 'socialist cultural offensive.' On the contrary. When, on 27 January, 1958, Kadar resigned his post as Prime Minister, his farewell speech contained a warning to the peasant writers: 'We consider the group of so-called peasant writers not as representatives of a literary trend but as a political group which, in one way or another, resists progress. The ideological premise of this group—whether they admit it or not—is incompatible with the leading social role of the working class, and this cannot in any way be reconciled with the building of a socialist society in which the working class is the leader.'

KADAR's warning was a signal. It opened the third phase of the post-revolutionary period, that of the cultural offensive. The press missed no opportunity to attack the peasant writers. On 16 February the *Magyar Nemzet* (Hungarian Nation) attacked Peter Veres, Gyula Illyes, and Aron Tamasi, and a vitriolic barrage was laid down against Sandor Erdei because of an essay he had written on Dezso Szabo, an enigmatic Hungarian who had died thirteen years earlier. Jozsef Szigeti, Lukacs' former disciple and now Deputy Minister for Culture, accused Erdei of having written an essay that was really a 'search for ancestors' for Imre Nagy and his companions because, speaking of Szabo, he had brought in the notion of national independence, and praised Szabo's attitude of hostility to German colonisation of Hungary.[3] 'Erdei,' wrote Szigeti, 'fails to mention that our link with the socialist camp and its leading force, the Soviet Union, is the prerequisite of our national independence, the safeguard of the independence of a socialist nation.' And he added, 'One does not learn from Erdei's essay what happened to that national independence after 1945, or even in 1956. But the fact that he keeps eloquently silent concerning the solution of this great problem of Hungarian history and the counter-revolutionary attack made upon it is equivalent, in Dezso's thought, to an accusation levelled against the dictatorship of the proletariat that it has misappropriated the revolution.'

The press showed a preference for articles, written mainly in East Germany, against Lukacs, and for attacks by Peking and Moscow on revisionism and nationalism. In these circumstances the Hungarian government could not bring itself to award its greatest distinction, the Kossuth Literary Prize. It was unwilling to make itself ridiculous by giving it to a third-rate party scribbler, and consequently, for the first time since the prize was established, Hungarian writers were not invited to appear in Parliament on 15 March when Ferenc Munnich, the Prime Minister, distributed the Kossuth prizes for 1958.

After Khrushchev's visit to Budapest in April 1958 the cultural offensive was continued with new élan because the Soviet Premier and party secretary had reinforced the position

[3] Szigeti felt this as a personal slight because in 1943 he received a scholarship and was sent to Germany to study the ideology of the colonisers. Today he is cultural commissar for the Soviet Union.

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of Kadar and his group.[4] On 5 May *Nepszabadsag* published the text of Kallai's speech to the Political Academy of the Hungarian Communist party. He had made it clear that the party was not satisfied with the results achieved; its counter offensive had advanced slowly, and though the enemy's forces had weakened his influence had not been eliminated and the socialist revolution had not yet triumphed in Hungary. 'The time has come to launch an all-round ideological and cultural offensive for the further development of the socialist revolution,' the Minister said, and went on to warn the editorial board of *Kortars* that they must give proof of a more determined and more Marxist attitude. 'We must strengthen our ideological consistency and do away with the erroneous belief that ideological liberalism might attract to us prominent litterateurs who, today, keep away from us.' Kallai asked for firmer state and party control and expressed the wish that 'the attitude of the party should always be one, and the press should not react in different ways to the same problem.' He held out the prospect that 'against ideologically hostile elements' the party 'would also throw administrative measures into the battle.'

This speech clearly showed that the party was reverting to its old methods. This conclusion is also supported by Kallai's announcement that the Ministry was reorganising the various associations of creative artists 'on which the counter-revolution had laid its mark.' 'We must see to it that in these associations leadership remains in the hands of elements loyal to the people's democracy.' At the same time the Journalists' Association, dissolved after the revolution, was re-established; its executive committee was not elected by its members, but by electors screened and appointed by the party.

Since the influence of the fine arts on public life is less pronounced than that of literature, the regime may be more liberal with the artists. The Minister did not even mention them in his speech. The party has no difficulty in controlling the films produced and shown in the cinemas, or the plays put on by the theatres; but it is worried by the reviews of these films and plays in the press. In his speech Kallai severely reproved the critics for not having given sufficient praise to the plays 'Whirlwind' and 'Blindfolded.' These potboilers could not have given the Minister great aesthetic pleasure; he expects the critics to praise the trashy work because the plays revile the revolution and are therefore useful to the party. As in Zhdanov's time, political utility is the criterion.

HOW will the Hungarian writers react to the cultural offensive? Their rebellion was determined by their indignation against the implications and consequences of Lenin's theory of the role of the party; their post-revolutionary behaviour was conditioned by their changed relationship to the party. They no longer gave it their support, but considered it a dangerous and unreliable force to negotiate with. Can they now accept the utilitarian aesthetic derived from Lenin's theory—that, paraphrasing Kant, the beautiful is that which pleases party interests?[5]

The events of the last twenty months give a negative answer to this question. However, by breaking their silence for comprehensible and rational reasons, the writers have suddenly become vulnerable. They can no longer be classified according to whether they dare or dare not write, but only by what they write.

The writers have lost their illusions about the Communist party, but the passivity of the West in 1956 and afterwards, and the ruthless

[4] Information from Budapest is to the effect that Kadar convinced Khrushchev of his loyalty by reporting that Tito had tried to persuade him to stand up to Moscow and follow Gomulka's example. This may also help to explain Moscow's changed attitude to Belgrade.

[5] It is indicative of the standing of socialist-realist literature that when *Nagyvilag* (World at Large) carried out a poll among its readers to find out whose writings they wished to read among foreign authors, the editorial board delayed the publication of the replies for months, but at last made up their minds to give the results. The number of votes was withheld, but the order of preference was as follows: Hemingway, Graham Greene, Huxley, Thomas Mann, Camus, Cocteau, Aragon, Steinbeck, Brecht, Mauriac, Wilder, Leonhard Frank, Sholokhov, Sartre, Pratolini, Caldwell, Joyce, Faulkner, Maugham. The periodical commented bitterly on the most conspicuous aspect of the results, the unequivocal defeat of the socialist-realist writers of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

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intervention of the Soviet Union also dispelled every illusion of the possibility of a rapid and radical change.

The loss of illusions, in fact, is not confined to the intellectuals of the opposition. Even the supporters of the regime do not pretend that the socialist world in Hungary is the best of all possible worlds. In the last analysis even their trend of thought is negative when, answering their critics, they argue that in 1956 there was only a choice between fascism and communism, and communism was the lesser evil. As far as the party is concerned, it too is sceptical, and has lost faith not only in its infallibility but also in its strength. After all, this administrative structure, built 'scientifically' on the basis of technical experience accumulated over several decades in the working class movement, fell to pieces in a few days before the party members' very eyes.

This made it the more likely that Kallai's threats of administrative action would be followed by deeds. The execution of Imre Nagy and his friends has increased the probability of such procedure, but even more significant is the general stiffening of the policies of the Soviet camp, of which these administrative murders were only a consequence. Nagy's death has widened the gulf between the intellectuals and the party, but it is conceivable that under the pressure of the regime they will be compelled to put their names to new declarations.

THE indictment published after the execution of Imre Nagy mentions the names of several writers and journalists. Among others that of Mikles Gimes, who was also executed, and Geza Losonczy who, according to the indictment, died in prison, a victim of administrative murder. Miklos Vasarhelyi, condemned to five years in jail, was a well-known journalist. The indictment mentions Sandor Haraszti, Gyorgy Fazekas and Laszlo Kardes, all writers and journalists now under arrest of whose fate nothing is known, Tibor Dery and Gyula Hay who had been sentenced earlier and Tamas Aczel, who has fled abroad, as men who played an important part in the preparation of the revolution and in an 'anti-state conspiracy.' As it is usual, both in the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, to hold, parallel with or after the principal trial, a series of secondary trials the sentences of which are not published in the press, it is more than likely that the Hungarian writers have been even more severely hit than is shown by the unusually high percentage of writers and journalists among the accused and sentenced. It is characteristic that all those mentioned in the indictment had been prominent party members. Losonczy, Gimes, Vasarhelyi were top-ranking staff members of the party's official organ, *Szabad Nep* (Free People), Sandor Haraszti chief editor of the party's evening paper, *Szabadsag* (Freedom), Gyorgy Fazekas chief editor of the Partisan newspaper, Laszlo Kardos head of the People's Colleges, Dery, Hay and Aczel cherished writers of the party. It is equally characteristic that all these men had been driven into opposition by moral indignation when the facts behind the Rajk trial became public.

After the revolution and its defeat, the moral indignation of the Hungarian writers has passed the point where it indulges in day dreams or impels them to take irrational risks. It may be that very soon the party will no longer be satisfied with non-political writings; then, in this world of negatives, the important thing will no longer be what the writers write but what they keep silent about. One thing is certain. Whatever compromises they may be compelled to make they will fulfil the first duty of the intellectual: the duty to doubt. Not out of sobriety, nor as the imperative of some solemn pledge, but because, after the physical and intellectual adventures of the last two years, they are no longer able not to fulfil it.

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Changes in the Polish Countryside

THE LAND TO THE PEASANT

A. A. Rozental

POLITICALLY, economically, and ideologically, agriculture remains the most vulnerable part of the Communist carapace. The new course in Polish agricultural policy, following upon the dramatic events of October 1956, sheds additional light upon a problem that has plagued the communist rulers for the last forty years.

The inclusion into the Soviet orbit of countries with a predominantly peasant structure not only resuscitated the ideological debates that were buried with Bukharin but also challenged the political power of the Kremlin. In the three most recalcitrant satellites, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Hungary, the issue of agrarian policy loomed very large indeed.

An analysis of the events in Poland shows clearly that freedom of decision-making in agriculture was regarded as an important part of the 'Polish road to socialism.' It may be conjectured that the viability of Gomulka's regime will be determined by the success of its agricultural policy and it is even possible that such success, should it come, will have repercussions in other parts of the Soviet world.

The sorry state of Polish agriculture can be traced to three chief factors: slavish adherence to the Soviet model of central planning, inefficiency and incompetence in the internal administration of agricultural production, and the dogmatic pursuit of collectivisation and the 'class struggle' in the countryside. It is this last factor that is crucial. Incompetence and inefficiency can be found, particularly in the realm of agricultural policy, in the most devoutly capitalist countries, and overemphasis on industry and neglect of the rural population seems to be a characteristic of the development plans of many of the 'uncommitted' nations.

It appears to be true that physical compulsion to join the collectives was used only rarely in Poland; there were a few isolated instances of confiscation of land and equipment or threats of imprisonment. The method principally used was that of economic and fiscal compulsion on the one hand, and the prospect of economic gain on joining the co-operative, on the other.

In the villages where a producer co-operative was to be formed land had to be exchanged, and the recalcitrant peasants found themselves with inferior land in place of their own, which was taken over by the collective. Individual farmers were last in line for purchasing machinery, building materials, and fertilisers, which, in conditions of overall scarcity, meant that they frequently could not obtain them at all. Only rarely were they granted credits, especially for long-term improvement. They were subject to compulsory deliveries and heavy taxation in kind that took a very large share of their produce. The situation of the individual farmer was made unbearable if he fell under the elastic definition of a 'kulak.' The policy of implementing Lenin's tripartite formula—that of alliance with the poor peasant, co-operation with the middle peasant, and struggle against the rich peasant—had to be adopted, even though there were few rich peasants left. This determination to follow through in the class struggle against the 'kulak' often meant that a 'kulak' had to be invented if he could not be found. A peasant became a 'kulak' not merely because he employed hired labour or because he farmed a large area. With the exodus from the farms and with limitations on land holdings both conditions became rare. A 'kulak' came to mean a peasant who was efficient and successful, a living contrast to the despised and often bankrupt state and collective farms. 'Kulaks' could not join the collectives, use the machinery of the state centres, or borow from credit institutions. They were subject to an almost confiscatory level of deliveries and a vicious land tax that became sharply progressive not only with the area of land farmed but with the arbitrary classification of the type of soil. In addition to having to endure political

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and social chicanery the 'kulak' had to provide virtually free services to poor peasants, lend them equipment and livestock, and live under the constant threat of severe penalties, including confiscation, for any breach of his numerous duties. Little wonder, therefore, that actual and prospective 'kulaks' preferred to give up farming altogether, whenever they could not collude with officials. Many of the most efficient and productive farmsteads were ruined in this fashion. The so-called middle peasant quite deliberately tried to restrict his productivity and output for fear of being classed as a 'kulak.' Even the poor and landless peasants whom the government tried to enlist on the proper side of the barricade had nothing but contempt for this policy and their sympathies continued to lie largely with the 'kulaks.'

PRODUCER co-operatives were encouraged in every conceivable fashion. Those willing to join had their tax arrears and other obligations written off. Not only the co-operatives themselves but even their political supervisory apparatus became a safe haven for convicts and criminal elements. The State Land Fund offered the newly formed co-operatives good land and the exchange of land within the villages was often made to work out to their clear advantage. The land tax, the level of deliveries and other contributions were lower for members of collectives. They had priority in the purchase of fertilisers and building materials, first call on the services of local Machine Centres, and various other benefits and favours. With all this, only a negligible fraction of the Polish peasantry actually joined the collectives and the majority of these did so under the slogan 'let's all steal together.'

Another sorry page in the story of Polish agriculture is that of the State Farms. These large areas of land were to be the Polish *sovkhozy*, the ultimate ideal of Marxist agriculture. They were given some of the best land, absolute priority in the delivery of supplies, preferential use of the services of the State Machine Stations, and most of the existing resources of technical skill. Yet their annual deficit grew every year in spite of subsidies, the cost-free provision of capital, and all kinds of accounting devices designed to hide the unpleasant truths of the balance-sheet. Not only were they costing the State much more than they were worth, but their efficiency was deteriorating steadily in comparison with other sectors of agriculture.[1]

THE rulers of the Polish economy were aware that the policy being followed in agriculture was bringing disastrous results. But up to the death of Stalin, and particularly up to Khrushchev's famous analysis of Russian agriculture in September 1953, little could be done.

Beginning with 1954, mild attempts were made to revise the discriminatory policy towards the individual farmer, to lessen the severity of the class struggle, and to provide some market incentives for the private sector of agriculture. But it should be stressed that these were tactical concessions and in no way ran counter to long-term policy. Parallel with providing some incentives to the farmers, collectivisation was still to be pursued, notwithstanding repeated warnings about illegal methods of enlistment and violation of 'socialist legality' in the fight against 'kulaks.' The preferential treatment of collectives and state farms continued. The discriminatory fiscal and credit apparatus remained virtually unchanged.

It was not until the dramatic events triggered by the Poznan riots that a definite and drastic change was made in agricultural policy.

The return of Gomulka, the shortage of foodstuffs in industrial centres, and the long soul-searching about agriculture all played a part in the dramatic turnabout. But the mass dissolutions of co-operatives that immediately preceded the meeting of the eighth plenary session of the central committee of the Polish Communist party were of decisive importance. It was this mass desertion of co-operatives, given belated sanction by the Plenum resolu-

[1] In 1955, private holdings accounted for 78·8 per cent. of the area of agricultural land, producer co-operatives for 8·6 per cent., and State Farms for 12·6 per cent. Yet privately-held land produced 83·9 per cent. of the total agricultural output, co-operatives 7·7 per cent. and State Farms only 8·4 per cent. (W. Gomulka, Report to the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party, *Nowe Drogi*, October 1956, p. 24).

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tions, that caused the drastic shift in agrarian policy.

The essence of this policy was the acknowledgment that higher output and productivity in agriculture could come only from the individual farmer, suitably rewarded for his efforts and secure in the possession of his land and livestock. Political pressure was abandoned in favour of the 'inexorable march of history' that would ultimately convince the peasant that collectives were good for him. This, however, was to be an organic process, without any compulsion to speed it on its way, and with all the assurance that the peasant would hold his land for himself until such time as he decided to do otherwise.

To reassure the peasant that the land would in fact be 'owned by those who till it,' restrictions on land transfer and ownership were swept aside. Hitherto, the sale and leasing of land distributed under the land reform or allocated under the settlement scheme had been prohibited. Now, transactions in that land were to be allowed and the legalisation of titles was to be speeded up and vigorously enforced. Moreover, peasants were to be compensated for unfair exchanges of land parcels incident to the formation of collectives, and in many instances land illegally confiscated by the collectives was to be transferred back to the previous owners.

An important aspect of the new course in agricultural policy was the attenuation, if not the outright abandonment, of the 'class war.' The policy towards the 'kulak' was no longer to be 'elimination,' nor even 'restriction and isolation.' For the first time, former 'kulaks' were to be admitted to producer co-operatives should they want to join. A successful peasant was to be encouraged rather than persecuted for good husbandry. It was even conceded that a *bona fide* kulak, who fulfilled his obligations to the state, should be allowed to work in peace and that his economic contribution justified his continued existence.

The steepness of the land tax schedule was reduced, particularly in the top bracket of the marginal rate. A promise was made to reclassify land for purposes of taxation and compulsory deliveries, so as to eliminate the former inequities. Compulsory milk deliveries were abolished, and official policy was directed to the gradual elimination of forced deliveries of meat, grain, and potatoes. For the time being, many smaller farms were exempt from compulsory grain deliveries and the grain quotas were reduced by about one-third for all farms.

In order to stimulate agricultural output on the 85 per cent. of farming land under private ownership by providing market incentives, the official prices for grain, meat, and potatoes were doubled. At the same time, the prices of commodities purchased by farmers were also increased in line with the avowed policy of putting the town-country relationship on a market basis. Even so, the net effect of changes in costs and prices brought a substantial benefit to the countryside.

PARALLEL with the development of the new policy towards the individual peasant there were significant changes in the attitude towards the socialised sector of the economy. Of the 10,000 producer co-operatives in existence in mid-1956, little more than 1,500 remained in operation after the turn of the year. Many of the disbanded co-operatives were financially sound and some were quite profitable. In a number of cases the members preferred to suffer a severe loss rather than continue with the collective. It became clear that more than purely economic interest would be necessary to make peasants join a co-operative of their own free will. This fact was faced squarely and, in a number of cases, the officials of local councils completely reversed the direction of their former zeal and actively promoted the dissolution of collectives.

The efforts to organise producer co-operatives were from then on to be minimised or held in abeyance. The emphasis was rather on the creation of various 'lower' forms of co-operation, including the hitherto repressed 'capitalist' forms: marketing and building co-operatives, and numerous associations organised for *ad hoc* purposes. Stress was put on the importance of peasant self-government in organising and managing all forms of peasant co-operation. Party leadership in the villages was to be toned down, if not completely hidden, and every effort made to restore local peasant leadership and to resurrect the prestige of the discredited Union of Peasant Self-Help.

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In pursuance of this policy, the local Machine Centres were to be disbanded and their equipment sold to the co-operatives and to individual peasants, who were encouraged to form groups for that purpose and were promised state credits. In the transition period, the Machine Centres were to discontinue their preferential pricing to the collectives and were instructed to price their services at cost and make them available to all comers. The State subsidy to the Centres was also discontinued.

The State Agricultural Farms were to undergo drastic reorganisation. Their inflated administrative personnel was severely reduced and an attempt made to replace political hacks by skilled technicians. The farms were put on a separate accounting system, although the policy of subsidising them continued. More important, the State Machine Centres were henceforth to be paid in cash rather than in kind, and in areas where socialised agriculture was at its weakest they were to be reorganised into repair centres and instructed to make their equipment available for hire.

These reforms were gradually implemented during 1957. To the peasants they were significant not only because of their economic importance and the real relief they brought, but also because they were attributed to the influence of Gomulka, whom the peasants regard as their champion in the Communist party.

THE most striking and immediate result of the 'thaw' was the sharp rise in the price of land and of horses. Previously, in spite of the desperate need of the Polish economy for a higher agricultural output, much of the land was untilled and the proportion of waste and fallow was increasing. Now the peasants, reassured that they would not be persecuted for efficiency nor deprived of their holdings by collectivisation, reasserted their land hunger. Even though limitations on the size of holdings remained in force, they were broadened and in any case, did not prevent some parcels from doubling and trebling in market value. The higher prices for horses reflected the shortage of draft power, combined with the renewed drive on the part of the peasants to increase their output.

The Government was aware that important as security of tenure was to the peasant, and crucial as the removal of the spectre of collectivisation could be to his productivity, these measures in themselves might not be sufficient. The peasant needed more fertiliser, more small implements and tools, and more building materials before his revived incentive could be effectively translated into a substantially increased yield per acre. Accordingly, the private sector of agriculture was promised more of the necessary supplies and the Five Year Plan was revised to give a larger allocation of investment funds to capital-starved agriculture, and also to increase the capacity of the chemical and agricultural implement industries. At the same time an attempt was made to shape fiscal policy so as to enable some capital formation in rural areas to be channelled by the peasants themselves, principally into village construction. This last point does not appear very clearly in the official directives and pronouncements, however, perhaps because 'capitalist' accumulation in the countryside has for so long been anathema to communist agrarian doctrine.

Even though the actual increase in investment funds and supplies to rural areas was not very great, the leaders declared themselves satisfied with the effects of their reforms.

The 1957 crop showed an increase of one quintal per hectare in the yields of the four major grains, a key index of Polish agriculture. There was also a substantial increase in cattle and a very great increase in the number of sheep.[2] While fewer than 100 new producer co-operatives were formed in 1957, over 10,000 agricultural 'circles' were set up. Many of these were constituted for a specific purpose and the number founded declined perceptibly after the middle of the year.

But the government and Party leaders still have cause for anxiety in the attitude of the peasants. Compulsory deliveries, though substantially reduced, were not being filled. Defaulting of taxes increased considerably and

[2] *Cf.* Polish Press Agency (PAP) *Release,* 5 February 1958. Recently, the Minister of Agriculture, Edward Ochab, presented a bill to the Seym authorising the sale of some 300,000 hectares of State Farm land to the peasants at prices below the market average (*Trybuna Ludu,* 13 March 1958).

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is causing real concern to those responsible for agricultural policy. The new freedom given to the more enterprising farmers is apparently being abused in some cases and complaints are voiced about the growth of shady practices, black market dealings, and corruption. There is also growing concern about the recrudescence of 'capitalistic' elements in the countryside. In short, while Gomulka may feel his policy vindicated on economic grounds, he may well wonder whether the rural thaw will not become a flood that can threaten to carry him with it.

ALTHOUGH the thaw in the countryside has not lasted long enough for firm conclusions to be drawn, it has brought a number of important considerations to the surface. Perhaps the most important question that needs to be answered is whether the new Polish agricultural policy is to be regarded as merely a tactical detour or whether it is a genuine reversal of bankrupt policies and the beginning of a new communist attitude to the peasant problem.

In this connection, three historical parallels come to mind. The New Economic Policy (NEP) of the USSR in the 1921-28 period, the new developments in Soviet agriculture under Khrushchev, and the agrarian 'New Course' of Imre Nagy in 1953 and 1954.

It is impossible to do justice to a comparative analysis of these diverse periods within the confines of an article. But even a cursory study would reveal that the Polish experiment has little in common with Khrushchev's policy and bears only a superficial resemblance to the NEP, but is in some respects very similar to the short-lived Hungarian 'New Course.'

In spite of the many administrative and economic reforms wrought in Soviet agriculture after the death of Stalin, the main line remains that of socialisation of the countryside. All the evidence suggests that, market incentives to *kolkhozniki* notwithstanding, the Soviet rulers are now embarking on a phase where what remains of individual production will gradually be eliminated and both plant and livestock production more and more concentrated in the collective. Even the sale of the Machine Tractor Stations, and the abolition of quota deliveries, the two latest concessions to the *kolkhozy*, do nothing to change the existing property structure in Soviet agriculture. They do, however, betray a growing anxiety about agricultural productivity.

During the NEP, while far-reaching concessions were granted to the individual peasant and collectivisation was suspended, it was always implied that collectivisation was to be resumed as soon as industry developed to the point where it could supply machinery to agriculture. More important, NEP did not follow a period of intense collectivisation as did the thaw in Poland. It was rather the 1945-1948 period that, in Polish agriculture, corresponds to the Russian NEP.

The period of Nagy's first premiership does bear a number of striking similarities to the present Polish policy. Perhaps the most striking is the freedom given by Nagy to members of producer co-operatives to leave the co-operative, and the provision that a majority of members could dissolve a collective if so disposed. But the crucial difference between the Polish and the Hungarian experience is that Nagy was isolated by the rest of the Central Committee, who did not support his policy and indeed did everything to prevent its implementation. Nagy may have had a large measure of popular support in the country but in the Party his influence at the time was much less than that of Rakosi. This does not seem to be true of Gomulka. His leadership in the party is not seriously challenged and his agricultural policy has the support of his colleagues, many of whom had serious forebodings about the former policy even in the heyday of the 'personality cult.'

There is little reason to doubt that the present communist leadership in Poland are determined not to press on with collectivisation for a long, long time. While the ultimate 'socialist transformation of the countryside' is always mentioned in connection with assurances to the peasants that they will retain their freedom of choice, it is difficult to know whether this is merely the expression of a pious hope or simply a verbal ritual so characteristic of life-long Marxists.

It is possible to imagine a set of circumstances that could end the Polish thaw. The most important of these might be a continued

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rise in the price of foodstuffs sold in the open market, the non-fulfilment of even greatly reduced compulsory deliveries, and the growing defaults on obligations to the State. If these trends reach serious proportions, while evidence of corruption and 'capitalistic' tendencies and 'class stratification' in the villages continues to multiply, Gomulka will be under severe pressure to re-examine his policies.

IT must be borne in mind that Poland is still dependent on Russian grain, in spite of the American loans of surplus wheat. A bad harvest, unrest in the towns, some easily exploitable excesses in the countryside, may give Russia a powerful bargaining counter and enable it to demand a revision of Gomulka's revisionism. Short of such a fortuitous combination of circumstances, however, the thaw may be expected to become a lasting feature of Polish agricultural policy.

Why is it that 'socialist agriculture' is so rigorously pursued as an ultimate goal of communist policy in spite of the enormous cost that this policy has exacted in the past? There is no simple answer to that fundamental question, and even partial answers must probe deep into the communist mentality.

The official position justifying the eventual socialist transformation of the countryside is that only then will the 'exploitation of man by man' be eliminated. Others point out that such exploitation can be effectively prevented by State control, without collectivisation. The less than 1 per cent. of agricultural population in private employment receive wages that are much higher than those paid by the State Farms. Moneylending and usury, to the extent that it takes place, usually involves party officials in the countryside rather than 'kulaks.'

Other writers began to question the basic Marxist premise that the development of agriculture under capitalism leads inexorably to large-scale agricultural units and that, therefore, in a socialist state, agricultural production must eventually be confined to large collectives. The attack on the basic premise takes two forms. Some writers point to the concurrent growth in the number of family farms even in the most developed capitalist countries, and imply that such farms continue to thrive and remain highly productive and efficient. Others even go so far as to suggest that there is no reason why the building of socialism should not proceed on two levels, socialised in industry, and small-scale and individualistic in agriculture.

Even when it is granted that the development of small-scale production in agriculture will lead to capitalism, it is argued that the State has the means to contain these undesirable phenomena. Thus, some writers on agriculture talk about 'State-directed capitalism' as the solution to the dilemma of an individualistic sector in a socialist economy that desperately needs more agricultural produce to feed its population, to provide raw materials for its industry, and to pay for its imports.

That socialist, large-scale production in agriculture is inherently superior to any other form has always been a firm communist doctrine. True, it is conceded that the obstinacy of the peasant, his irrational attachment to the land, or the historical tradition of peasant ownership may in the period of transition militate in favour of the peasant farm. But it was believed that in the absence of these impediments and given a 'proper' policy of socialisation, the benefits of collectivisation would be so apparent that the co-operatives would enlist the support of the peasants themselves. This still remains the official creed of the Polish Communist party. But there are some in Poland who have begun to question even that; they challenge it not because it is absolutely untrue but because it does not necessarily have to be true at all times and under all conditions. There are indications, particularly in the scientific publications, that collectivisation is being assessed on its merits and not as a dogma, an inseparable part of a system of thought that has to be swallowed whole.

There can be little doubt that in some areas of Poland, particularly in the south, with its dwarf holdings, dispersed strips and lack of humus, there is little scope for the peasant farmer. It is equally certain that in other areas there is an immense productive potential in the peasant cultivation of land. It is refreshing to find such differentiation in communist thought and the implied suggestion that collectivisation should not be insisted on in a doctrinaire fashion.

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BULGARIAN WRITERS AND THEIR MENTORS

L. Brisby

THE present position of intellectuals in Bulgaria is that of acrobats precariously balanced on a tightrope stretched between the 20th Soviet Party congress and the Hungarian revolution. The Party leadership still pays lip-service to the decisions of the 20th Congress on the abolition of the 'personality cult' and 'dogmatism' in literature, but insists that the main danger, pointed by events in Hungary, is now 'revisionism'.

The anti-revisionist campaign gathered momentum throughout the summer of 1957, taking its cue from the 3rd plenary meeting of the board of the Soviet writers' union in May and Khrushchev's pronouncements on the rôle of literature and art. As in Russia, Bulgarian writers of liberal tendencies were accused of a 'conspiracy of silence'. *Literaturen Front*, organ of the Bulgarian writers' union, which in its editorial articles reflects Party views although it has occasionally echoed dissentient voices in accordance with the government's policy of providing a safety-valve for discontent, wrote on 17 October 1957: 'The recalcitrant writers use obstinate silence as a form of argument. This does not apply to those who prefer to wait and don't take part in discussions not so much from conviction as for personal reasons. Because those who use "silence" as a form of opposition to the Party line in literature are far from silent; on the contrary they are quite loquacious and "bold", but on their own platform, "over a glass", in their homes and villas, in clubs and some editorial offices' . . . yet 'they have not the courage to come out in the press and defend their positions, or prove their accusations about "the betrayal of the decisions of the 20th congress," although they have repeatedly been invited to do so. Even now such an opportunity is offered them. But they evade it with an ironic smile or the justification "you will not pass my article, and even if you do, I have no wish to be labelled an unhealthy element".'

Another six weeks were to pass before the oppositionist writers faced the full blast of the Party guns at a meeting of Party members, at which the Judas rôle was played by A. Gulyashki, secretary of the Party bureau of the writers' union. As editor-in-chief of *Plamuk*, the new literary monthly which early in 1957 became the mouthpiece of revisionist trends, Gulyashki had hitherto been associated with the liberal writers. His choice for the rôle of Party spokesman at the 31 November/1 December meeting indicates that he has changed sides, whether genuinely or for opportunist reasons is hard to say. The report read by him and the ensuing debate (published in *Literaturen Front*, No. 52, 1957) made it clear that the leadership was faced not merely with isolated cases of insubordination, but with a serious crisis threatening the whole Marxist basis of contemporary Bulgarian literature. An alarming number of poems, short stories, novels and plays were said to depict socialist reality in a manner calculated to undermine confidence in the Party's policies and to create a wrong impression of conditions under communism. Current methods of literary criticism also came under fire. Critics were accused of reviewing works merely on their artistic merits at the expense of the all-important ideological aspect ('we cannot evaluate literary phenomena from a purely literary point of view').

AN interesting facet of the report was its revelation that a recalcitrant attitude to Party interference in art is strongest among the younger generation of intellectuals: 'they raise the banner of petty-bourgeois liberalism and advertise their courage by expressing doubt in the method of socialist realism, and if someone dares to criticise them, they immediately regard themselves as victims of "restored dogmatism".' Reference was made to the clandestine multiplication and circulation in typescript of state-

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ments by Soviet writers who unconditionally defended Dudintsev's novel *Not by Bread Alone*, and to rowdy scenes at the Young Writers' Club where defenders of the Party line were shouted down and called 'literary mothers-in-law'. The debate showed that the very principle of Party guidance in art is being questioned by a growing number of communist writers. Doubts about the competence of the Central Committee 'to dictate in the delicate and subtle sphere of literature and art' have been expressed openly and the suggestion has been put forward that compliance with Party directives should be optional (cf. *Literaturen Front*, No. 52, 1957).

The manifest unity of a considerable proportion of writers vis-à-vis their 'Stalinist' mentors was a striking feature of the discussions. Slavcho Vassev, editor of *Literaturen Front*, complained that instead of getting praise, faithful followers of the Party line are belittled and surrounded by opprobrium: 'It would seem a crime to take up a Party attitude.' Not one of the censured writers saw fit to make the unconditional recantation expected of him. 'Instead of showing that they have understood and felt the things for which they were criticised, they tried to minimise their mistakes and used distortions, insinuations, and hints to excuse themselves and appear less guilty before the Party than they really are,' Gulyashki said at the end of the December meeting. An ingenious line of defence was to ascribe the blame for ideological deviations to the rigid and narrow attitude of the Stalinists. The contention of the prominent critic Panteleï Zarev that 'unhealthy or revisionist tendencies would have been impossible in our aesthetic and artistic practice had it not been for dogmatic formulations' was much resented by the Party leadership, which prefers to link revisionist trends with 'bourgeois theories emanating from the old nests of decadence and ideological philosophical centres in the West.' The attempt to discredit the stand of the 'rebels' as unpatriotic by connecting it with the propaganda of Western broadcasting stations is reminiscent of Khrushchev's approach last summer, when he appealed to the patriotism of Soviet writers on the lines that their insubordination weakened public morale and played into the hands of Russia's enemies.

IT is, of course, nonsense to speak of 'bourgeois subversion.' With the exception of Liuben Stanev (a young author whose novel *The Laskov Family* caused a sensation a year ago because of its outspoken criticism of the new ruling class), all the censured writers and critics are communists. Emil Manov, whose short novel *Unauthentic Case* was criticised for its alleged distortion of the relations between individual and community under socialism, defended his ideas with great spirit: 'Let us not forget that sometimes man is more important than the institution . . . that man is the lofty goal for which our society struggles . . . Let us not separate the theory of our humanism from our practice, even in single cases, because such separation does more harm to the Party than ten false definitions of realism' (*Literaturen Front*, 24 October 1957). Manov's novel, which characteristically bears a motto by Stendhal,[1] describes the personal tragedy of a communist whose marriage breaks up when he meets again his old love. Hounded down by 'well-intentioned' comrades, he takes to drink and finally is driven insane. In depicting the smug and self-righteous attitude of Party officials who have no understanding for the suffering individual, Manov claimed to have attacked not the Party itself, but 'philistinism with a Party ticket.' By implication, his pessimistic novel struck at the foundations of the officially propagated myth of a brave new world, in which all personal problems can be solved through an adjustment to society under the enlightened guidance of the Party. As one indignant member of the Presidium of the writers' union put it: 'What is the moral of the story? Apparently that some people have Party cards in their pockets, but otherwise human dramas remain the same as in the past!'[2] Another work to incur official displeasure was Todor Genov's satirical play *Fear*, which apeared in the magazine *Theatre* in January 1957. The hero of the play is an ex-partisan who becomes a hardened

[1] The topical interest of Stendhal's ideas for the Communist writer of our day was the theme of a severely criticised article by Ilya Ehrenburg, 'On the lessons of Stendhal', published in the August issue of the Soviet magazine *Inostrannaya Literatura*.

[2] Ivan Ruzh in *Literaturen Front*, 28 November 1957.

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bureaucrat and careerist, and under the degenerating influence of fear betrays a former comrade-in-arms by accusing his son of a fault he has himself committed. The play contains a scathing parody of the famous poem 'Oh lead me, Party, lead me,' by Christo Radevski, secretary-general of the writers' union, whose unflinching zeal for the cause of the Party is not matched by his poetic gifts. Another passage which caused offence records the following exchange between two members of the higher Party hierarchy: '*A:* You are a spider, woe to the man caught in your web! *B* (hurt): I try not to fall into the web of other spiders! That is a philosophy! . . . *A* (overcome): Oh! my nerves . . . forgive me, we have all become entangled in a spider's web, the question is who is going to unravel it for us . . . that spider's web in the Central Committee' (quoted in *Literaturen Front*, No. 40, 1957). The editor of *Theatre*, Gocho Gochev, was severely reprimanded for publishing *Fear*, and for inciting authors to write without fear of the censorship, 'as Lermontov wrote his *Poet's Death* without thinking of whether he would be sent to Siberia.' Others reprimanded included M. Velichkov, who had reviewed *Fear* favourably (in *Plamuk*, August 1957); Academician Ludmil Stoyanov, chided for his 'un-Leninist' declaration according to which 'a writer should preserve some distance from the politics of the day, rather than find himself in the false and unrealistic position of writing opportunist works'; K. Penev and R. Ralin, 'who have become notorious throughout our capital with their anti-Party aphorisms and epigrams'; I. Radoev, for his play *Tranquillity;* and B. Delchev for his suggestion that socialist realism be replaced by the wider concept of 'revolutionary realism.'

Behind the specific charges of insubordination to the Party line in literature, wider issues of a political nature were at stake. During the following months the publicists of the regime took up the theme of the interdependence of literary deviation and ideological doubt. 'The rejection of socialist realism is a rejection of the revolution and the socialist order', declared an editorial of *Literaturen Front*. The bogy of Hungary, where literature allegedly became the Trojan horse of the 'counter-revolution,' was held up as a warning for communist writers in Bulgaria who had dared to express sympathy with the Poles and the Hungarians and to criticise Soviet armed intervention in Hungary. The leadership appears particularly worried about the critical attitude of many writers towards the régime's collectivisation policies—'those writers who superficially penetrate into our villages and weep for the "condition of our peasants".'[3] This attitude is reflected in several recent works. *Out of Love*, a short story by St. Z. Daskalov about the victimisation of a peasant who is unjustly accused of drunkenness while on a visit to Soviet Russia, was attacked as a travesty of life in a collectivised Bulgarian village. Other writers were taken to task for 'reviving the well-known reactionary theories about the hostility between town and countryside which were the alpha and the omega of the policy of the old bourgeois parties' (*Literaturen Front*, 6 March 1958). Slavcho Krassinski's verse drama *Famous Yana* is supposed to fall into this category. It describes the King Lear-like experiences of a widowed peasant woman at the hands of her three sons, a professor, a doctor, and a composer—all three clearly recognisable types of the new communist urban intelligentsia. The play's implied charge that the purity of human feelings and relations has been lost in the ashes of the old patriarchal peasant society provoked the protest: 'Is this the new socialist art or is it simply a lament for the past?' (*Literaturen Front*, 20 March 1958).

SINCE every new tactical drive of communist policy invariably produces its spate of fashionable catchwords, it is worth looking at the current additions to the official jargon. *Epigonstvo* has been coined to describe the escapist tendency to idealise the simple virtues and traditional values of the old type of village rather than tackle the tricky theme of a countryside in the throes of socialisation. Writers have been warned not to imitate 'the idyllic-folksy, naively-humanistic approach to peasant life' of the great classic of the Bulgarian short story, Yordan Yovkov, hitherto held up as a model. The opposite fault to traditionalism is *psevdo-*

[3] 'On clear Party positions', *Literaturen Front*, No. 52, 1957.

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novatorstvo (pseudo-innovationism), a literary heresy allegedly rampant among the younger generation of writers who are accused of addiction to contrived forms, a desire for novelty at all cost, and a mania for aping Hemingway and Camus (cf. *Plamuk*, December 1957). All works which were the subject of official reprobation during the past year are charged with *tchernogledstvo* (a pessimistic outlook on life): 'there is only one step between pessimism and political error.' Its twin failings are *empirism i opissatelstvo* (empiricism and descriptionalism), i.e. the factual registering of the seamy side of life under socialism, without an 'ideological perspective' to remind the reader of the Marxist Utopia at the end of the thorny road.

This brings us into the very heart of the controversy on the nature of socialist realism. Is it a method, a *Weltanschauung*, a principle, a movement, a style? The conference on realism convened in Moscow last spring by the Institute for World Literature of the Soviet Academy of Sciences failed to give a clear answer. According to the accepted definition, socialist realism is 'a creative method for the truthful, concrete-historical representation of reality in its revolutionary development.' The term contains a basic contradiction: 'realism' presupposes an objective reflection of life, while 'socialist' implies a definite standpoint from which the writer interprets reality. For instance, there can be no doubt about the profound realism of works like L. Stanev's novel *The Laskov Family*, his volume of short stories *Cold House*, E. Manov's novelette *Unauthentic Case*, and T. Genov's drama *Fear*. Yet they were condemned as incompatible with socialist realism. In order to overcome this fundamental weakness in the concept of socialist realism, the late Zhdanov put forth the theory of 'revolutionary romanticism' which socialist realism was supposed to *include*. Thus the 'monumental heroism and the grandiose perspectives of the building of socialism' which a realist writer, content to seek inspiration from his personal observation of life, might easily overlook, are reintroduced by the backdoor of romantic idealisation. Nevertheless, Manov's suggestion (in 'Creative Forum,' *Literaturen Front*, 24 October 1957) that it would be more to the point to distinguish between realists and romantics in socialist literature, to admit the existence of 'socialist romanticism' instead of 'widening' the concept of socialist realism until it becomes meaningless, was rejected as anti-Marxist. Yet Manov was echoing such Soviet authorities as V. Shcherbina who, in a special report read at the Moscow discussion on realism, could only indicate the complex nature of the question and express the hope that further research would solve 'the cursed problem of romanticism in socialist realism' (quoted in the Bulgarian monthly *Literaturna Misl*, No. 4, 1957).

Another hotly debated point is the relation between socialist realism and 'critical realism,' a term used to designate the pre-revolutionary realist movement in literature. A year ago, it was still official literary policy in Bulgaria to pretend that there was a profound continuity between the realist tradition of Bulgarian literature in the past and socialist realism. Now this line has been modified, because many young writers are justifying their critical social attitude by referring to the example of their revered literary predecessors. At the annual meeting of the writers' union at the beginning of April this year, the secretary-general voiced the Party's new dogma that the 'critical realism' of the writers of the past is no longer suitable. 'Today's society and today's State have nothing in common with the social conditions and institutions of the past, for our contemporary social order is based precisely on those virtues which our predecessors extolled, while that which they rejected has either ceased to exist, or exists as something discarded and condemned to extinction. In these circumstances, our realism can only be a positive one. It says "yes" to our socialist reality. That is why it is called socialist realism.'[4] A slightly more subtle redefinition of socialist realism was offered by A. Gulyashki in *Literaturen Front* (27 March 1958) on the eve of the annual meeting of Bulgarian writers: 'Our method is hostile to naturalism as a means of expression, because by its very nature it implies a philosophical generalisation of phenomena, a way of thinking based on the prin-

[4] The same theme was developed by T. Zhivkov, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party (*Lit. Fr.*, 10 April 1958).

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ciple of party-mindedness (*partiinost*), on the principles of our Marxist-Leninist ideology.' From that it followed that writers should merely 'use facts as material for the construction of a certain conception.'[5]

But even though it has been given a face-lift, socialist realism is unlikely to provide writers with the required stimulus. It remains true that works which show some creative originality, almost invariably are found to have offended against the method. Conversely, a recent novel by Pavel Vezhinov about the digging of an irrigation system in Northern Bulgaria, *The Arid Plain*, shows that even a very gifted writer finds it well-nigh impossible to write a good book according to the tenets of socialist realism. A return to historic themes which allow the writer more freedom is a notable feature of recent literary production, in contrast to the numerous works on contemporary subjects which appeared during the 'thaw.' The last issues of the literary monthlies *Plamuk* and *Septemvri* contain chapters from two new historical novels dealing with medieval Bulgarian kings, a long epic poem about the legendary 14th century hero Krali Marko, several short stories and poems inspired by Bulgaria's liberation from the Ottoman empire, but practically no 'contemporary' fiction. Compared with the opening months of 1957 they make dull reading indeed.

THE consummation of the anti-revisionist drive was the annual meeting of the writers' union in April 1958. In his address, Todor Zhivkov, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, went out of his way to emphasise that the 20th Soviet congress had not changed the fundamental direction of the Party's economic, industrial, collectivisation, and cultural policies, which had always been correct—it had merely eliminated some mistakes in their application. He stressed that 'the concept of spontaneous development of literature and art is alien to our Party, to Marxism-Leninism,' and told the writers that they had misunderstood the Chinese slogan 'let a hundred flowers blossom.' The guiding rôle of the Communist Party in all spheres of public life was objectively determined by the historic laws of social and economic development. Hence the Central Committee was fully entitled to guide also literature and art 'according to plan.' Film workers who lately have come under heavy fire for 'adding water to the stream of anti-Party aesthetic views'[6] were singled out as an instructive example of the pitfalls of an a-political attitude. For the rest, Zhivkov echoed almost verbatim Khrushchev's sermon 'For a close link between literature and art and the life of the people' (*Literaturen Front*, 10 April 1958).

After a period of comparative independence, in which it was admissible to declare that questions of Bulgarian literature would be decided at home, the official press is bowing again to Soviet experience and Maxim Gorki. It is hard to imagine a more fitting symbol for the way the clock has been put back in Bulgaria, than the reprinting in *Literaturen Front* (17 April 1958) of Christo Radevski's much ridiculed ode to the Party—a poem typical of the worst literary Stalinism:

> . . . And if I should ever forget myself
> And start to slander you—
> Don't spit at me! —For then
> Such honour I would not deserve
> Not even the honour of your spittle!

However, there is one important difference from the period of the 'personality cult': the manifest reluctance of the Party to apply drastic sanctions against recalcitrant intellectuals. It is true that at the end of the year six members of the editorial board of *Plamuk* (E. Manov, T. Genov, S. Severnyak, M. Isaev, O. Orlinov, and P. Danchev) were removed from the staff of the magazine; similar reshuffles took place in the editorial office of *Otechestven Front*, mouthpiece of the Government, and in the executive board of the journalists' union.[7] But

[5] According to Academician Todor Pavlov, an authority on Marxist theory of art and an implacable enemy of 'revisionism in aesthetics', the ideology content (*ideinost*) is a law of art, one of the laws of beauty. This view is disputed by Yugoslav, Polish, and Czech Marxist theoreticians.

[6] *Literaturen Front*, Nos. 4, 6, 1958.

[7] The accusation of 'revisionism' levelled against the entire editorial board of *Filosofska Misl* and against prominent members of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Karl Marx Institute for political economy, and the State universities, has so far not been followed by 'administrative measures'.

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despite occasional threats there have so far been no expulsions from the Party, even though several of the criticised writers have stuck to their guns. The benevolent tone of Zhivkov's speech at the annual meeting of the writers' union, expressing the hope that the straying sheep would return to the fold, was a sign that the Government still hopes to achieve ideological consolidation by persuasion rather than pressure. In this connexion renewed attention is being paid to the rôle of the critics, who are asked to come forward as guardians of ideological orthodoxy and to 'break with the practice of non-interference in the literary process' (*Literaturen Front,* 3 April 1958).

There has been a marked desire on the part of the leadership to lift the controversy from the plane of personal animosities and professional rivalries to that of matters of principle ('let us fight for the final elimination of all quarrels and group struggles'). The Party has been at pains to stress the need for unity, and the mildness of the treatment meted out to the 'rebels' is calculated to win them back rather than alienate them completely. (In the case of two of them, T. Genov and L. Stoyanov, this policy seems to have met with success, if one is to believe their protestations at the annual meeting.)[8] The Party's tightening grip on the writers, as well as its tactics of conciliation, are reflected in the recent changes in the leadership of the writers' union, which on 8 April elected its new executive. Radevski was replaced by another fanatical champion of Party policy, Georgi Karaslavov, probably because the latter's greater personal popularity and standing as a writer offers a better guarantee for the restoration of discipline amongst the union's rank and file. The inclusion in the secretariat of the 'rebel' critic, P. Danchev, considered to have made 'a serious attempt at self-criticism,' is no doubt meant to show that all that is needed to win back official favour is true repentance. It is perhaps not without significance that the new Presidium was not elected 'unanimously,' as is customary, but 'by a great majority.' The eight members dropped from the board of the union include Manov, Delchev, Zidarov, Lamar, and Isaev—all communist writers censured at the 31 November/1 December meeting of the Party bureau.

There is no reason to believe that the reorganisation of the writers' union and the intensified drive for vigilance and militancy in all sectors of cultural and artistic life, will eliminate the ferment among the intelligentsia. It is difficult to see how ideological heresy could be uprooted without the reimposition of terror. The impact of developments in Poland and Yugoslavia, which have resolutely rejected socialist realism, and the existence of a 'cultural opposition' in the Soviet Union itself, is a strong antidote against the feeling of isolation which has demoralised Bulgarian intellectuals in the past. A curious admission of the powerful attraction exercised by liberal currents of thought came from the first secretary of the Central Committee: 'You need not be a prophet to see that without the permanent guidance and instruction of the Party the influence of Marxism-Leninism would decline and, on the various sectors of the ideological front, deviation from socialist principles and penetration of bourgeois ideas and theories *would inevitably occur*' (*Literaturen Front,* 10 April 1958). The signal failure of the Bulgarian Communist Party to master the dangerous cross-currents released by the 20th Soviet Congress shows that it remains caught in an insoluble dilemma: how to raise the quality of literature and thus its efficacy as a weapon of 'mass education' without abandoning the sacrosanct principle of *partiinost*.

[8] Since this article was written E. Manov has come forth with a guarded statement in support of Party guidance in literature. In an interview with the Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency on 17 May, clearly intended for foreign consumption, Manov adroitly avoided self-criticism, but attacked Western propaganda for the 'questionable honour' it had paid him in praising his much-criticised novel *Unauthentic Case*.

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CARTOONS: MOSCOW–PRAGUE–WARSAW

Karel Brusak

JUST as, in art, there are in general two modes of approach to the subject and its treatment, portrayal on the one hand and abstraction on the other, which can be seen side by side as far back as the drawings of prehistoric man, so two corresponding trends can be traced throughout the history of caricature. One approach, although it uses exaggeration, distortion, and travesty, keeps within the limits of both realism and of logic; the other moves away towards pure invention, irrationalism, nonsense. The first genre, that can be followed from the Greek vase paintings through the medieval Dances of Death to Hogarth, survives in the political caricature of our time; derived directly from the social scene, it relies for its appeal on rationalisation; it is moralising and educational. The second, unexpectedly manifest in the cave paintings of primitive peoples, sacred Egyptian papyri, and medieval religious manuscripts, descends to the present day through the work of Edward Lear and the surrealist cartoonists of the macabre and fantastic; it cares neither for social reality nor logic; it appeals directly to the unconscious.

It is understandable that during the Revolution the Soviet caricaturists, with hardly any tradition to fall back on, should choose an approach and style reminiscent of the medieval *biblia pauperum;* the posters and wall-newspapers, the crude simplified drawings, luridly coloured and accompanied by satirical verses, deliberately imitated popular religious art. The chief task of these satirical 'windows,' in whose execution the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky played an important part, was propaganda, the mobilisation of the people in support of the new régime. Pictorial satire came to be taken very seriously as an important channel for influencing public opinion in the right way. Gradually a code was established, for both the themes which might appropriately be treated and the style to be adopted, and *Krokodil* (published under different names since 1922), emerged as the *Journal Officiel* in the field of humour.

With the ascension to power of Communist régimes after the war in those countries where caricature had developed on lines familiar in the West and showed both trends, and especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia, the Soviet canon was immediately imposed. Caricature lost its freedom and was harnessed to serve the régime. But although to a superficial observer the general pattern may appear almost uniform, there are, nevertheless, quite a number of differences between the humoristic papers in the various countries of the Soviet bloc, and during the past few years the marked changes in other spheres have had their influence on caricature. In fact, a comparison of the cartoons published in Soviet Russia and in some other popular democracies provides an interesting indication of the attitude of the country to the West and of its relation to the leading country of the socialist bloc; it also casts some light on the local political, economic and social climate.

THE material for this comparison is drawn from an analysis of all the cartoons published during the first half of this year in the Soviet paper *Krokodil*, which appears every ten days, and of those published in the Czechoslovak paper *Dikobraz* (Porcupine) and in the Polish *Szpilki* (Pins), which are weeklies. The average number of cartoons in each issue of these magazines is almost equal; the respective figures are 22 for *Krokodil*, 21 for *Dikobraz* and 22 for *Szpilki*.

The subject matter of the cartoons has been classified under six headings. First there are the attacks on the West, ranging from direct abuse of Western leaders to criticism of the Western way of life, varying much in wit and violence. Thus the subject of the American missile bases in Europe may be treated by a luridly coloured drawing of Dulles with blood dripping from his hands (*Krokodil*), by a cartoon of Minister

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Strauss dancing with an atom bomb above the caption 'The Waltz of the Federal Strauss' (*Krokodil*), or by a sketch of Dr. Adenauer asking over the telephone: 'Is that Washington? What is my attitude to the Rapacki plan?' (*Szpilki*). Similarly, the American way of life may be criticised by a simple sketch of the charred body of a lynched negro (*Dikobraz*) or by an elaborate drawing, showing a boy with a black mask, in a sort of Tyrolean outfit, torturing a cat with one hand and brandishing a knife in the other, a girl, also with a black mask, in jeans, an old-fashioned blouse and a red beret drawing a revolver with one hand and holding a wine-glass in the other, in a room adorned with a film poster of a man killing a woman, a globe with a fork in it and a bottle of *wiski* on the table, while the caption reads: 'American Working Days. The children have gone to school' (*Krokodil*). On the whole, cartoons of this type in *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz* are much more savage than in *Szpilki;* a fair example taken from *Szpilki* shows a man all tied up in knots trying to type, with the caption: 'The Prime Minister of one of the Western powers types a reply to Bulganin's letter.' Incidentally, this cartoon, published in *Szpilki* on 2 February, was reproduced in *Krokodil* on 3 March; but as in the meantime Bulganin had been deposed, 'Bulganin's letter' was changed in the *Krokodil* caption to 'the Soviet peace proposal.'

The second group are cartoons which can be characterised as optimistic and positive and whose purpose is morale-raising. The sputniks bringing peace to the world, Soviet achievements in the Antarctic, the passenger plane TU-104, the Cyclist Peace Race (*Dikobraz*), a picture of a family, the wife carrying a basket with milk bottles, bread, potatoes and other foodstuffs, and balancing an enormous horrible flower vase on her bosom, the husband burdened with a huge television set, a rocking horse and a bag with champagne and tins of food, the son with boxes inscribed 'Football' and 'Cake', all above the caption 'Pre-holiday Load' (*Krokodil*). Cartoons glorifying the socialist scene are especially popular with Soviet and Czech cartoonists. Sometimes sinister undertones can be detected, as in a drawing celebrating the May Day parade and showing people looking at a sky full of jets with red stars on their wings, to which the caption reads: 'A sunny day—nevertheless the sky is full of stars' (*Krokodil*). The Polish cartoonists have small liking for these subjects and nearly all cartoons on this theme in *Szpilki* during the period examined were connected with the Rapacki plan.

The criticism of shortcomings in daily life is the next permitted and indeed encouraged topic. There are, however, two important rules to be observed; only those things can be criticised in which improvement is reasonably to be expected, and secondly, the criticism must be directed against individuals or against groups of people, such as kulaks, bureaucrats, or drunkards, or against definite institutions, such as a local committee or a certain factory, and never against the system in general. In this way the cartoons with a critical approach to everyday reality fall into two categories.

The larger one, forming the third group of this survey, castigates workers, peasants, and intellectuals for different reasons—absenteeism, laziness, low standards of work, alcoholism, frivolous divorces and moral laxness, religious faith, hoarding of supplies, black marketeering, destruction of state property, and their craze for Western dance music, films, fashions and so on.

ANOTHER category of critical cartoons, fourth on the list, goes somewhat deeper; it attacks shortages and bad quality of consumer goods, bureaucrats and managers. In Soviet Russia and Czechoslovakia it never goes beyond the local, district and regional administration; the ministries are mentioned only very rarely and none of the three papers in the period under review has published a cartoon of a member of the Government. They vary much in their satirical approach to the everyday life of the country.

Pure humour, classified as the fifth group of the survey, needs no special explanation. Cartoons of this type exploit the appeal of the irrational and nonsensical; most contemporary Western cartoons, and certainly the best of them, are of this kind. In fact, a good many of the cartoons to be found in *Szpilki,* and to a lesser extent also in *Dikobraz,* are reproduced

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from Western magazines. It is in this field that the difference between the three papers is most marked. Hardly any cartoon appears in *Krokodil,* which could be classified as pure humour. A typical example is a drawing showing a room full of cats; a visitor asks the owner: 'Why do you have so many cats?' 'Because of the neighbours.' 'Do they like them?' 'No, they hate cats.' Humour for humour's sake is unknown in *Krokodil.* There is always a slant implying some criticism, either political or moral, with a tendency to improve and educate people. The Czech *Dikobraz* appears slightly less inhibited, as it occasionally

THE REVISIONIST POINT OF VIEW
(*KROKODIL*, 20 MAY, 1958)

reproduces cartoons from Western non-communist papers such as the *Daily Mirror, Ici Paris, Paris Match, Münchner Illustrierte,* etc. But the type of autonomous cartoon without any caption is very rare; by and large the selection suggests a Victorian vicar choosing a joke for his parish magazine. They are cartoons of the type: 'You pulled out my good tooth!' 'Don't worry, we shall work round to the bad one,' whose humorous possibilities were exhausted long ago. In looking for examples of pure humour in *Dikobraz* one becomes aware of the stultifying influence of the Soviet example on a country which has a long and proud tradition of nonsensical humour and where this species used to flourish in several excellent periodicals.

The pure humour characteristic of *Szpilki* is quite another matter. Not only do cartoons of this group form the bulk of the drawings; they are also outstanding in their wit and artistic performance; *The New Yorker, Punch, Quick, Collier's, Lilliput,* and *France Dimanche* are drawn on freely, and the readers of *Szpilki* have had the pleasure of seeing many examples of the art of Peter Arno. The original output of the *Szpilki* cartoonists shows a strong inclination towards nonsensical, cruel and erotic jokes, and a surprising familiarity with the West is apparent in many allusions to such characters as Hemingway and Sagan and Eartha Kitt. A witty comment on Ionescu is given in a cartoon in *Szpilki* which shows two men standing in front of a giant foot while one of them says: 'Did you try tickling?' Cruel jokes, which in recent years have become so numerous in the West, have a special section devoted to them under the heading 'Supplement for People of Strong Nerves,' packed with cartoons of surprising morbidity: 'Is Mr. Kowalski in?' 'Yes, but only till four.' 'Why till four only?' 'His funeral is at four.' Jokes of this kind are tabu for both *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz,* and so is everything even faintly approaching the sensuous sketches of the able artist Maja Berezowska, which help to give *Szpilki* its special character among the three papers under review. She is one of the artists who provide an element of continuity in *Szpilki.* Her drawings decorated its last page before the war as they do now. A German concentration camp has not impaired her *joie de vivre,* displayed in drawings of charming ladies in various stages of undress accompanied by handsome young men. Her gaiety and wit are precariously balanced on the edge of indecency, but prudery is disarmed by her ingenious use as captions of verses from highly respectable Polish poets. This kind of sophisticated sensuality is one of the features which distinguishes *Szpilki* from its more orthodox counterparts in other communist countries.

Finally, the sixth group: this consists of reproductions of works of earlier masters of caricature, such as Honoré Daumier.

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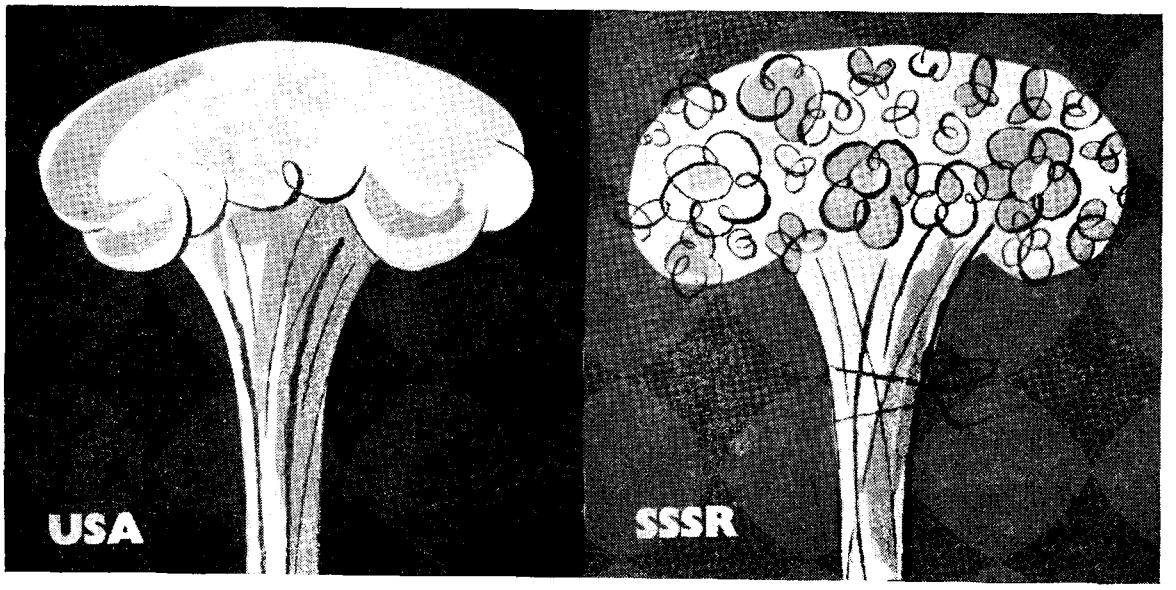
THE percentage of the total number of cartoons published by the three papers in the first half of 1958 taken by each of the six thematic groups is shown in the following table:

	Krokodil	*Dikobraz*	*Szpilki*
1. Attacks on the West	24·4	19·2	6·6
2. Optimistic/positive	14·5	6·2	0·9
3. Criticism of the people	34·6	21·4	16·7
4. Criticism of the administration ...	20·4	21·8	10·0
5. Pure humour ...	5·2	29·3	64·7
6. Reprints of classics	0·9	2·1	1·1

per cent. of the total in *Szpilki*, 18·6 per cent. in *Dikobraz*, and a mere 10·4 in *Krokodil*. The provenance of these reprints was as follows:

	Krokodil	*Dikobraz*	*Szpilki*
Western non-communist papers	—	8·7	28·8
Western communist papers	3·9	4·7	0·4
Soviet sphere papers	6·5	5·2	2·0

The foreign cartoons reprinted in *Krokodil* are always political, those in *Dikobraz* sometimes political, and those in *Szpilki* hardly ever. In *Dikobraz* these reprints are oases of humour in the desert of elaborately tendencious and



SPRING IS HERE (*DIKOBRAZ*, 10 APRIL, 1958)

Thus, in anti-Western propaganda and the boosting of morale the Soviet paper *Krokodil* is far in the lead, followed by the Czech *Dikobraz*, with *Szpilki* well behind. *Szpilki*, on the other hand, corresponds more to the analogous Western magazine, as the bulk of its cartoons are purely humorous without any propaganda tendency, while this kind of cartoon is very much neglected in *Dikobraz* and kept down to the minimum in *Krokodil*. Anti-Western bias and deliberate isolation become further apparent from a comparison of the number and provenance of foreign cartoons reprinted. During the period under review reprints of foreign cartoons amounted to 31·2

witless jokes. This has been recognised in a recent article on *Dikobraz* in the Czech literary monthly *Kveten* (April 1958): *'It is not often, when reading* Dikobraz, *that we can laugh, not at the caption or the subject but at the drawing itself. For this we have to look to the corner where* Dikobraz *puts its imports, alas, very scarce. At these we can laugh heartily and at the same time it makes us wonder why the humorous drawing without words is almost extinct in our country.'*

Satirical cartoons dealing with daily life are numerous in all three papers, and in order to get a better perspective it is necessary to divide them as to their subjects. Of the total number

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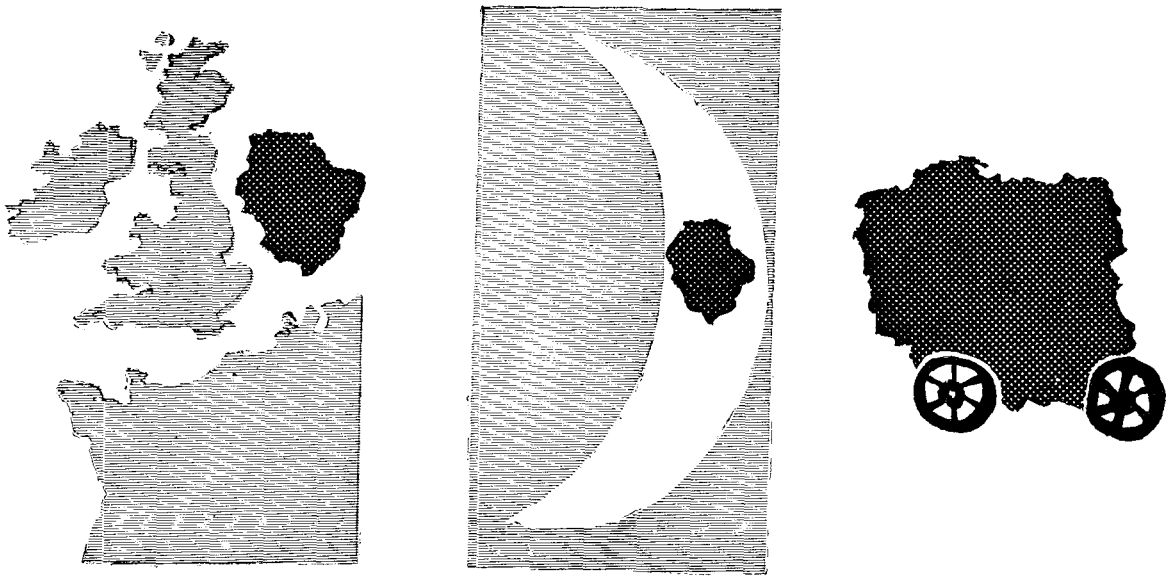
of cartoons criticising different aspects of socialist reality, the percentages aimed at the targets listed below are as follows:

	Krokodil	*Dikobraz*	*Szpilki*
People	58·2	46·8	52·5
Intellectuals	3·6	2·2	7·7
Religion	1·2	0·6	2·6
Bureaucrats / administration	30·5	36·7	13·8
Shortages	6·5	13·7	23·4

As these figures show, the volume of satire directed at ordinary people is about equal in all three papers. Their approach, however, differs. In *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz* a great many cartoons criticise the indifference of the peasants to the agricultural machinery rusting in the fields; such cartoons are rare in *Szpilki*. Many of the Soviet cartoons are didactic, implying that amenities provided by the régime are far in advance of the capacity of the people fully to benefit from them; a peasant woman uses a scrubbing-board in a splendid washing-machine that is not plugged in, etc. While the Soviet and Czech cartoons dealing with absenteeism, alcoholism, hooliganism and moral laxness tend to play down the reality, the Polish cartoons are ruthless. A cartoon against hooligans in *Krokodil* shows boys playing football in a public pathway and preventing an old woman from passing; in *Szpilki* a similar theme is treated in a drawing of two *very small* boys, smoking and drinking vodka, with the caption: 'Hooliganism is much smaller.' A man looking after his aquarium instead of going to work, which is how *Dikobraz* treats absenteeism, makes a dull and ineffective cartoon as it is an understatement instead of an exaggeration. A corresponding cartoon in *Szpilki* shows two men fishing, with an idle factory in the background; the caption runs: 'Ill?' 'Yes, serious infection of the throat.' 'Much worse with me—pneumonia.'



POLAND IN SOME PEOPLE'S DREAMS (*SZPILKI*, 13 JULY, 1958)

Intellectuals and religion are more frequent targets in *Szpilki* than in the other two. In the case of intellectuals the reason is the keener interest of *Szpilki*, undoubtedly the most highbrow of the three, in cultural matters; the cartoons are on the whole free of malice. As far as anti-religious themes are concerned, the emphasis varies. In *Dikobraz*, where cartoons of this type are very rare, neither priests nor believers are attacked, the sallies being directed at the international conspiracy of the Catholic Church. *Krokodil*—since there is a national Church—spares both the establishment and the priests and bears down upon the faithful. Two

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men, a local inhabitant and a visitor, are talking in front of a village church: 'There is an excellent choir in our village.' 'Where can one hear it?' 'In the church.' The implication, of course, is that such a choir should be attached to the Party Club. Or a cartoon showing a young girl in the confessional: 'One more thing, Father—for the last two months I have not paid my Komsomol membership fee.' *Szpilki*, besides publishing cartoons of the kinds seen in the other two papers, also satirises priests in a fashion reminiscent of the old Soviet atheist caricatures; for example a drawing, without caption, of a fleshy hand holding a plate in which a calloused and emaciated hand is putting a penny.

It may seem surprising that both *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz* publish more cartoons criticising the administration and bureaucrats than does *Szpilki*. The explanation is that while *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz* treat special cases of administrative inefficiency, bureaucratism, etc., in cartoons, *Szpilki* deals with them in text only, as these subjects rarely yield a really humorous cartoon. In *Dikobraz* especially, where the whole last page of each issue is devoted to cartoons of this kind, the jokes have become stereotyped and very boring. Further, while the *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz* cartoons are rather tame and, as already mentioned, do not attack the administration beyond a fixed hierarchic limit, the cartoons in *Szpilki* have considerable punch and dare to lampoon even such hazardous subjects as secret trials or the failings of parliamentary deputies.

But it is in its criticism of the many shortages that *Szpilki* displays its honesty and strength. *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz* try to present the shortage and shoddiness of consumer goods as isolated facts due to local inefficiency, errors in distribution, etc. *Szpilki*, without looking for excuses, bluntly states the facts, often very wittily. A man looking at the moon says to another: 'How sad would be our life without the moon!' 'Are you a poet?' 'No, I'm in a power station.' Or another: A gigantic neon sign reading 'State Cabbage Shop' covers the front of a large building and points to a huge, brightly lit shop window with a single, miserable cabbage head.

It is this readiness to push the joke to the verge of cynicism that makes even the propaganda cartoons in *Szpilki* more humorous than those in *Krokodil* and *Dikobraz*, if less acceptable to Moscow.

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History Revised from Outside

CLIO IN BUCHAREST

Daniel Norman

RUMANIA is the one satellite which appeared virtually unmoved by the death of Stalin, and untouched by the wave of change which subsequently spread out from Moscow. Gheorghiu-Dej's motto seems to have been: 'Stalin is dead, but Stalinism must go on, otherwise we are all lost.' This did not preclude faithful adherence to the intricate contortions of official policy. The 'cult of personality' was condemned in Bucharest as elsewhere; the most notorious concentration camps were closed, the Danube-Black Sea Canal abandoned; but to preserve the balance Patrascanu, the former communist Minister of Justice, imprisoned since 1948, was tried *in camera* and executed. Others, too, were executed or deported to Russia. A series of concessions was made to the peasants, but at the same time large numbers of them were 'induced' to join 'the collective sector.' It was all reminiscent of the witless character in Caragiale's comic masterpiece *The Lost Letter,* who says: 'I agree. Either it should be modified, but then no change should be made; or it should not be modified, in which case one or two changes will have to be made . . . on the essential points.'

In some fields, the pressure has not been relaxed at all. From the beginning there has been an open and sustained effort at russification, particularly of the younger generation. The teaching of Russian, for instance, has been forced on everybody, even on those only just rescued from illiteracy. For adults the number of evening classes has been increased every year, and no ruse has been neglected to bring the reluctant pupils to these courses. In their turn, the reluctant pupils have overlooked no subterfuge to stay away from them. With the younger generation things were less complicated. Before the consolidation of communist power in 1948, Russian was an optional subject in secondary schools. Afterwards it became compulsory for all children, from their first year of elementary school, replacing the traditional second language, French. This was deeply resented by the majority of parents, and also placed a heavy burden on the children, who had to learn two alphabets at the same time. The difficulties were even greater for the children of the national minorities, for in their national schools they already had to start with two languages: their mother tongue and Rumanian. And as Russian was compulsory for them too, they have since 1948 had three languages to cope with from the start.

Yet in July 1956, when the Rumanian government at last decided to take heed of the parents' complaint that the effort demanded of their offspring was exhausting, and cuts were made in many subjects to allow more free time to the children, the number of hours for the teaching of Russian was increased. Moreover, while the Russian language remained compulsory in the schools of the national minorities, Rumanian became an optional subject for the little Hungarians, Germans, and other minorities—representing some 25 per cent. of the school population—'until they have acquired the mastery of their mother tongue.' Educational reform in the post-Stalin era thus relegated the country's national language to second place.

IT is necessary to emphasise that this happened after the famous Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party, at a time when there was much talk about the loosening of the ties between the USSR and her satellites. It took place just after Tito's triumphal visits to Moscow and Bucharest, which were the starting point of serious speculation in the West that Bucharest and Belgrade were 'flirting' behind the backs and at the expense of the Russians.

The invasion of Russian printed matter and translations from the Russian, characteristic of Rumanian post-war cultural life, has not only continued but has been intensified in the post-

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Stalin era. Sheltering, naturally, behind quotations from Gheorghiu-Dej and *Scinteia*, and without making the slightest allusion to the efforts of the publishing houses to disseminate the works of Russian writers, Zaharia Stancu, a veteran communist and leading author of the régime, dared to complain that 'the whole of Rumanian literature, from its very beginnings, has been allowed to fall into oblivion' ('Buried Treasures,' *Viata Romineasca*, August 1953). Referring to the plan of the State Publishing House for Literature and Arts to issue Rumanian translations of the world literary masterpieces—a project which 'will take 15 to 20 years to complete' and for which he was to some extent responsible—Stancu exclaims: 'Nine years have elapsed since the liberation of our Fatherland! Nine years! . . . Why in all this time have we concerned ourselves so little with our own rich literary heritage? Why, with such thoughtless miserliness, have we printed so few Rumanian classics, and none in complete editions; why have we let so many fall into complete oblivion? Why have we let dust, heavier than lead, cover the valuable works of so many authors who lived and wrote before 1916? And why, amongst all the authors who animated our literature between the two wars, have only two or three been reprinted?'

Zaharia Stancu of course did not answer these questions. Neither did anybody else. Nor was anything done to correct this abnormal state of affairs. There is still not a single complete edition of any of the Rumanian classic writers published under the present régime, and the pre-war ones are out of print. And this is not surprising, for it cannot be done so long as the slightest criticism of anything Russian, past or present, is considered a crime.

Frequently and for long periods the Tsars' armies occupied the Danubian Principalities. No occupation is popular. The Russian occupations were indeed most unpopular and every Rumanian writer worth mentioning was at one time or another bound to express the feelings unanimously shared by his countrymen. As a matter of fact the best fables and satires of Rumanian literature were written by writers who played a leading part in the 1848 revolution and were aimed at the foreign power occupying the country at that time, namely Russia.

Thus the only result of Zaharia Stancu's outburst was that he fell for a while into disgrace. Wisely, he refrained from persevering, and thus avoided the fate of his predecessors, of seeing his works drop into oblivion during his lifetime.

THE teaching of history offers another illuminating example of the russification policy in Rumania. The totalitarian revolution in this domain took place in 1947 when a new *History of Rumania* came off the printing presses of the State Publishing House. This 'unique text-book,' as it modestly labelled itself, was the work of four professors, its responsible editor being Mihail Roller, a fast-rising communist star just then back from training at the Moscow University. The work was commissioned and approved by the Ministry of Education and became the compulsory text-book in the top classes of all secondary schools. The authors claimed that, unlike its predecessors, it was based on 'a scientific conception and method.'

In 1948, after the overthrow of the monarchy and the proclamation of the People's Republic, and with the Communists well in the saddle, the manual was reprinted, but not before some drastic rewriting of the introduction, though in his preface Roller claims that they had only to correct some 'typographical errors' and to add a chapter on the past year's events. In this reprint the authors announced that they had produced not just a 'scientific' but a 'Marxist-Leninist' work. With minor additions, the text was reprinted for the opening of each school year until 1950, when a Russian translation appeared in Moscow. Unfortunately for those concerned, this encountered criticism from the Soviet historians, and a revised edition was called for. Led by the same Mihail Roller, who in the meantime had received a University chair and become a member of the Academy attached to the Party's Central Committee, a member of Parliament and of many other committees and commissions, a fresh team of six historians worked hard for two years and at last the 'second and improved' edition appeared at the end of 1952, under the title: *History of the Rumanian People's Republic*.

In the new preface, the seven authors claim to have improved the text-book in the parts

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concerning 'Dacia's organisation and slave revolts; the analysis of feudal institutions; the disclosure of the role played by the American and British monopolists, the traditional enemies of the Rumanian people; the activity of Social-Democrats as bourgeois agents inside the working class movement; the role of the Rumanian Communist party in the struggle for freedom, socialism, and national independence.' The re-writing was indeed extensive, and affected almost every page of the book, including the introduction.

This edition, which had the blessing not only of Gheorghiu-Dej but also of Stalin, the two main spiritual guides who are quoted at length on the slightest pretext, has remained the bible of every Rumanian schoolboy preparing for matriculation. The successive reprints show only slight additions and omissions, and a continuous adjustment to the jargon of the day. In the 1956 edition, for instance, new quotations from Gheorghiu-Dej's speeches were added to the introduction and to the chapter on history after the second world war. This, remarkably enough, has not been brought up to date. The 1950 announcement of the first Five Year Plan remains the last event mentioned in the text-book printed in July 1956 as in the 1952 edition. This last chapter is a headache to the authors. The present line in the narration of events during this period is fairly indicated in the last paragraph of the Introduction: 'After 23 August 1944, following the armed insurrection organised and led by the Rumanian Communist party and the victory of the Soviet armies, the working class led by the Rumanian Communist party conquered political power in the State and installed the people's democratic régime, the Rumanian People's Republic, a régime in which, following the example and with the help of the Soviet Union, we have started to build socialist society in our country.'

The coup d'état of 1944, which led to the overthrow of Marshal Antonescu's dictatorship and the alignment of Rumania on the allied side, is no longer the work of a 'coalition of democratic parties,' including the communists, under the leadership of King Michael, as it was in the 1947 edition. There is no longer any reference to the decorations awarded by Stalin to the King for his part in the events of August 1944. Nor, on the other hand, is the liberation of Rumania the exclusive and almost single-handed personal achievement of Stalin, as it was in the 1952 edition. In the era of the struggle against the cult of personality, praise is bestowed on the anonymous collectivities: the 'valiant and invincible Soviet soldiers' in the first place, and 'the popular masses' under the collective leadership of the C.P. next. The name of Stalin, mentioned so frequently in the previous edition, has been virtually eliminated. There is, however, still a slight survival of the cult. The actions and decisions of the C.P. are attributed to and built up around the escape of Gheorghiu-Dej, who had been in prison since 1933.

THE build-up of Gheorghiu-Dej is even more striking in the chapter relating the events which led to the foundation in 1921 of the Communist party of Rumania. The general strike of 1919 apparently had no leaders. The men who were at the time made responsible, imprisoned, and tried are not mentioned at all. Among this mass of anonymous, undistinguishable figures, which transforms the picture into a surface of unbroken and depressing gray, one single point of light emerges. Somewhere in the wilderness appears the illuminated face of Rumania's 'best son.' 'In the valley of the Trotush, among the fighters for the strike, is the 18-year-old Gheorghe Gheorghiu (called later by the workers Gheorghiu-Dej, because he worked and led their struggles at the Dej railway workshops), who in 1919 assured the liaison between the strikers of Tetzcani, Zemesh, Solontz, Comanesti.' His is the only individual name mentioned among the 200,000 men involved in the strike. Not one of those who fell as victims in the repression which followed the strike has earned the right to be remembered.

Nor is there any mention of the founders of the party. The leaders of the right and centre wings of the Socialist party are duly named and branded as 'traitors.' The members of the third faction, the left, which formed the core of the newly-born Communist party, have no names. Nor have the leaders of the party who were sentenced at the famous trial in Dealul Spiriei, the first great trial of communists in

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Rumania, which lasted six months. The police had arrested all the delegates present at the foundation congress. The names of the leaders of the party, other than those of Dej and his friends, even those mentioned in the first edition of 1947, have been omitted. Why? For the simple reason that all those who did not leave the organisation at one time or another to rejoin the socialists or to retire from politics, were killed, either in Moscow or in Rumania. Names like Marcel Pauker, Leonid Paukerov, Boris Stefanov, Patrascanu, are indeed dynamite. Those of Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca are better forgotten.

There is one man, however, whose name has always been under the ban of silence, and whose memory is feared above all others; that is Christian Rakovski, one of Stalin's victims in the Moscow show trials of the late thirties. Rakovski was one of the founders of the working class movement of Rumania. He was its representative on the Executive of the Second International up to 1914. In the long list of socialist publications given in the manual, the most important are not even mentioned, because his signature appears in them.

As a matter of fact, even if Rumanian historians simply wished to look today through some of the original publications which would normally be used as sources for a history of the workers' movement, they could not do so. The case of the first Rumanian socialist periodical is worth mentioning. The only copies which existed were destroyed immediately after the war. Its name was included in the list of fascist publications drawn up by the Ministry of Information in executing the stipulations of the armistice agreement signed in Moscow on 12 September 1944. Unfortunately, its name was *Bessarabia.*

BESSARABIA has been a bone of contention between Rumania and Russia since 1812, when it was annexed by the Tsar; it is a sort of East European Alsace-Lorraine, and a forbidden subject since the Red Army entered Rumania in 1944. The history of the province is indeed the nightmare of the Bucharest historians. No history textbook can ignore Bessarabia and the problems it has created, and it serves as a touchstone of the character of the one under consideration here.

The facts, very briefly, are as follows: Bessarabia was part of the Moldavian Principality when first annexed by the Tsar in 1812 after the Russo-Turkish war. Moldavia was a vassal, not a province of Turkey, and the Sultan had no right to dispose of it. The great majority of its inhabitants were of Rumanian origin, and the Tsars made great efforts to change the ethnical composition of the province by deporting Rumanians and introducing Russians and German settlers from the Baltic. By 1918, when the province was retaken by Rumania, the proportion of Rumanians in the population had fallen from 90 to 60 per cent.

Rumanian historians have always treated the acquisition of Bessarabia by Tsar Alexander as 'robbery,' and this opinion was shared by virtually all Western writers, including Marx and Engels. Towards the end of his life Engels published (in German, English, Russian, and French simultaneously) *The Foreign Policy of Russian Tsardom,* in which he summarised his own and Marx' views on this subject. 'Finland is Finnish, Bessarabia Rumanian, the Kingdom of Poland Polish. Here there is no longer any question of the union of scattered and kindred races, all bearing the name of Russians; here we see nothing but barefaced conquest of alien territory by brute force, nothing but simple theft.'

Tsarist historians, naturally, did not agree. Neither do the Soviet historians, which is perhaps less natural, considering the authorship of the statement.

What Rumanian historians of today think is difficult to ascertain. Outwardly they adhere to the Russian point of view. From the 1947 Preface to the *History of Rumania* we learn that 'in applying to Rumanian reality the most advanced achievements of historical science' the authors tried to portray 'the common fight of the peoples in this part of Europe against the Tatar, Ottoman, and Habsburg yokes.' Russian aggression has thus been 'scientifically' eliminated. Russia, Tsarist or Soviet, appears indeed as the traditional protector, the faithful and disinterested friend of the oppressed Rumanians, for whose freedom and independence Russian soldiers shed their blood over three hundred years. In the eighteenth century, for

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example, 'Russia waged repeated wars against the Turks, in which the Turks were always defeated; in the peace treaties, Russia consistently forced upon Turkey favourable conditions for Wallachia and Moldavia, often intervening at the Porte in their favour.' Throughout the century the Principalities 'relied more and more on friendship with Russia, who assured the Moldavian and Wallachian princes that in the Principalities everything should be according to their own judgment and dispositions' (p. 284). In the text which follows we learn also that the Turks were 'always the aggressors,' and that it was not for Constantinople the Russians fought, but for the 'Rumanians and other oppressed Christian peoples.' By the treaty of Jassy (1792) 'the Turks liberated to Russia (sic) all the territory between the River Bug and the Dniestr,' and by the treaty of Bucharest (1812) Russia 'liberated new territories from the Turkish yoke' (p. 320). The reader acquainted with Rumanian history will realise that these 'new territories' liberated by the Russians bear the name of Bessarabia.

It is not without interest to compare this 'Marxist-Leninist' account with Marx's own version of the same events. In *Herr Vogt* (first published in 1860) Marx quotes a Russian government memorandum of 1837 written for the future Tsar, which in his opinion gave a perfect definition of the Russian conception of 'liberation' and 'independence.' 'Russia,' says this document, 'prefers not to proceed to the immediate incorporation of States with heterogeneous populations . . . It seems better, in the case of countries whose acquisition has been decided upon, to allow them to continue for some time under their own native leaders, while being entirely dependent on us; this is what we did in Moldavia and Wallachia.' Marx comments: 'Before annexing the Crimea, Russia proclaimed its independence,' and adds his own summary of Russian-Rumanian relations in the eighteenth century: 'Since Peter the Great entered the Danubian Principalities, Russia has worked for their "independence." At the congress of Nemirov (1737) the Empress Anna demanded from the Sultan the independence of the Principalities under a Russian protectorate. Alexander I continued these efforts and confirmed them by transforming Bessarabia into a Russian province in 1812. Nicholas even blessed the Rumanians with the *Reglement Organique*, still in force, which organised the most infamous slavery . . .'

HAVING evaded the difficulty of dealing with the Russian conquest of Bessarabia by simply crediting the Tsar with the liberation of some 'new territories,' the authors breathe comparatively freely until they reach the Crimean War, when Southern Bessarabia was returned to Rumania. The provisions of the 1856 treaty are outlined in a short paragraph containing the sentence: 'Cahul, Bolgrad, and Ismail were taken from Russia' (p. 450). It is noteworthy that the Russian name of Bolgrad is used, not the Rumanian Cetatea Alba. The provisions of the treaty of San Stefano in 1878, which reversed the 1856 settlement, are given on p. 512. There we learn that 'an exchange of territories took place, Rumania receiving the Dobrudja . . . in exchange for territory from the south-west of what is now the Soviet Union.'

This phrase, 'territory from the south-west of what is now the Soviet Union,' replaces the tabu word Bessarabia; but the word appears at last on p. 627, where we learn that 'the reactionary Rumanian government, profiting from the difficult military situation of the young Soviet Republics, invaded and occupied Bessarabia in January 1918.' Skipping a hundred pages, we find that 'In June 1940, following an agreement between the Rumanian government and the government of the Soviet Union, the territorial conflict between the two which arose from the intervention of the Rumanian armies against the Soviets in 1918 was liquidated.' The last hint at this delicate question appears on p. 781, where it is stated that one of the stipulations of the 1944 armistice signed in Moscow was 'the re-establishment of the 1940 Soviet-Rumanian frontier.'

This skilful handling of the Bessarabian question did not, however, satisfy the Marxist-Leninist masters in Moscow. The 1947 edition apparently failed to demonstrate clearly enough that Bessarabia had always been a Russian province. The second edition of 1952 found the remedy by drawing attention to the fact that

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the Scythian Empire (the Russians, according to the latest Soviet theories, are the direct descendants of the Scythians) extended to the Carpathians and the Danube, and also by introducing a new chapter on 'The Formation of the Feudal State of Kiev.' This Eastern Slav state, with its 'advanced civilisation,' had 'vast territories stretching from the Carpathians to the Volga, from the Neva to the Danube.'

The chapter on the Russo-Turkish war of 1806-12, which ended with the annexation of Bessarabia, was dropped altogether; the Bessarabian question arises only after the Crimean war, when the three southern provinces were 'stolen' from the Russian fatherland and given to Moldavia by the Western Powers, who wished to cut Russia off from the Danube, and to transform Rumania into an outpost against its eastern neighbour. This new interpretation reappears as the 'theft' of Bessarabia in 1918, a theft committed by the Rumanians with the formal agreement not only of their allies but also of the Germans, with whom they were at war.

The most striking feature of the 1956 edition is that the authors of this history book have abandoned euphemisms and speak boldly of Bessarabia; they have, moreover, reinserted the deleted section on the war of 1806-12, which now ends: 'But the Russians, now menaced by Napoleon who had declared war on them, concluded peace with the Turks by the treaty of Bucharest, liberating Bessarabia from the Turkish yoke.' The passage concludes with these words: 'Under the influence of the more advanced Russian state, both the disintegration of feudalism and the development of the capitalist system were accelerated, and this, objectively, represented a progressive fact, despite the backward character of Tsarist policy' (p. 311).

The greatest surprise in the treatment of the Bessarabian question in the 1956 edition comes at the end of the chapter on the 'Vienna Diktat,' which deprived Rumania of part of Transylvania. There we read: 'On 27 June 1940, following an agreement between the Soviet and Rumanian governments, Bessarabia and North Bukovina were liberated, and this liquidated the territorial conflict between the two governments which had started with the counter-revolutionary intervention of the Rumanian armies against the Soviets in 1918.'

Before 1956 the authors of this textbook had 'liberated' only Bessarabia on 27 June 1940; there had been no question of 'liberating' North Bukovina, since this was the first time that Russia had annexed it.

It is characteristic of the 'scientific' quality of this book that King Carol's surrender to the Vienna Diktat and to the loss of part of Transylvania is described as a policy of 'national treason.' But on the next page, when he surrenders to the Moscow Diktat and 'liberates' not only Bessarabia but also North Bukovina (which had never before been part of Russia), he is the 'head of the Rumanian government' and his 'agreement' with the Russians becomes highly commendable.

THE changes in the 1952 edition (which are preserved in subsequent reprints) are not limited to those mentioned in the Preface and to Bessarabia. One important change passed over in silence is the almost complete elimination of any recognition of French influence, and especially the influence of the French revolutions of the nineteenth century, which was in fact a striking feature of Rumanian history. A few examples will give an idea of the extent of rewriting. In the account of the 1804 revolt in Moldavia given in the 1947 edition there occurred the following sentence: 'The leaders of the movement were certain boyars of middling fortune and certain petty boyars who, in a pamphlet . . . alluded to the democratic principles of the bourgeois revolution in France' (p. 302). This sentence disappears from the 1952 edition, no doubt because only Russian peasant revolts may be allowed to have had an influence on similar events in Rumania. The chapter on social life in the period 1828-48 ended as follows: 'The oriental customs of the boyars and the townspeople were abandoned under the revolutionary stimulus of Western influences. The dress and the manner of living of the Western bourgeoisie were adopted. The transition from the old customs to bourgeois customs was so abrupt that it led to disputes between the generations. The older generation dubbed the younger "bonjouristi" (many of the younger people, educated in Paris, used the

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French *bonjour* instead of the Rumanian *buna ziua*—D.N.) and young people called their elders "ishlicari," from the name of their old-fashioned boyar caps.' This highly subversive passage had to be dropped. Dropped, too, was the sub-title of the chapter on the development of capitalism, 'The bourgeois revolution in France and the Principalities,' and in its place we have 'The revolutionary movement in Russia and south-east Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century.' Throughout the text the influence of the Decembrists replaces that of the French Revolution.

The two versions of the Greek revolution offer an excellent illustration of the subtlety of the 'improvement':

> 1947 edition: 'The Greeks resisted with difficulty, helped by Western revolutionary organisations . . .'
> 1952 edition: '. . . helped by the revolutionary organisations of other countries . . .'
> 1947 edition: 'Public opinion in England and France, which regarded with sympathy the Greek movement for liberation from the Turks, compelled the two governments in London and Paris to come to an understanding with Russia to help the Greeks. The Anglo-French fleet defeated the Turkish-Egyptian fleet at Navarino . . .'
> 1952 edition: 'But the English and French did not want Turkey to grow stronger and escape their tutelage. This is why, moved by their own interests, they agreed with Russia to help the Greeks. At Navarino the Turkish-Egyptian fleet was defeated . . .'

Russian occupations, past and present, have always been, according to this book, happy family events. The Tsarist armies were received with flowers and cries of welcome. With their help, moral and material, the Rumanians were able to progress and to develop their natural resources. The contention of the *New York Daily Tribune*, in July 1853, that 'since 1828 the Protectorate of Russia has cost the Rumanian Principalities 150 million piastres, besides the immense losses caused through pillage and devastation,' is probably a reactionary imperialist invention. Unfortunately its author is Karl Marx himself.

The basic thesis of Rumanian historiography today is still that of Zhdanov's Cominform manifesto. On one side everything is black—the imperialist camp led by the United States, Britain and France, who are responsible for all the difficulties encountered by the Rumanians in the last few centuries; on the other is Russia, virgin white, toiling ceaselessly for the happiness of Rumania's inhabitants. As the authors put it in their comment on the 1947 peace treaty: 'In this treaty every just clause, favourable to Rumania, was due to Soviet diplomacy; there was no unjust clause, directed against Rumanian interests, which did not meet with the unflinching resistance of that diplomacy.' One might think that it was the West, and not Russia, which took Bessarabia and North Bukovina and exacted from Rumania war indemnities to the value of 300 million pre-war dollars—not to mention the booty carried off by the Red Army.

Incidentally, the valiant efforts of Soviet diplomacy on behalf of Rumania at the Paris conference are not anonymous; particular prominence is given to the part played by Molotov. The tributes to him did not appear in the first edition, and will no doubt be omitted from any future edition.

In short, this manual, which opens with the claim to be a 'scientific' and 'Marxist-Leninist' work, is throughout totally at variance both with the facts and with Marx. The only thing that remains unchanged is the unwavering subservience of Rumania to Russian historiography, illustrating the absence of any cultural relaxation in the 'frozen satellite' since Stalin's death.

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THE POLISH LITERARY SCENE

M. L. Danilewicz

THE events of October 1956 were followed by a temporary relaxation of the censorship in Poland. Manuscripts that had been kept for years in their authors' desks, or rejected by state-controlled publishing firms, were released for publication (contrary to expectations, they proved on the whole disappointing). Writers hitherto blacklisted were now rehabilitated and their books hurriedly produced in large editions. French and Anglo-American literature (in good translations) triumphantly invaded bookshops and libraries.

Unfortunately, this position is deteriorating at an alarming speed. In the Autumn of 1957 the students' weekly *Po Prostu,* with a circulation of 150,000 copies, was suspended in spite of widespread protests and mass demonstrations by the young people of Warsaw. A few weeks later came the decision to withdraw the licence granted to the editors of a new periodical, *Europa;* its first number, already in proof, was never issued. Then, in May 1958, eight of the most active members of the editorial board of the literary weekly *Nowa Kultura* resigned and the rebel periodical was handed over to Stefan Zolkiewski, editor in chief of another weekly, *Polityka,* a semi-official mouthpiece of Gomulka's entourage. Taken jointly, these measures constitute more than a warning. They are evidence of a drastic change of policy, provoking among writers and journalists feelings of uncertainty and reserve.

The young Polish writer, Marek Hlasko, had to publish his *Cemeteries* in Paris, as the censorship in Warsaw prevented him from publishing the book in Poland. Part of it had previously been published in the weekly *Panorama,* but the censors now found the author too pessimistic in his approach to the realities of life in Poland today.

Marek Hlasko, 25 years old and the author of two volumes of short stories depicting life in contemporary Poland, will be mentioned more than once in this article. His literary career is astonishing. Brought up and educated in post-war Poland, forced to earn his living at the age of thirteen, ex-taxi driver, he started to write in the socialist-realist manner, then revolted and became the most representative Polish 'angry young man,' with a group of followers ('Hlaskoids,' as they are called in Warsaw). Strongly influenced by Dostoevsky, Faulkner, and Hemingway, and by films of the type of 'Le salaire de la peur,' he merits attention in his own right as the spokesman of the communist-indoctrinated generation which has revolted against the discrepancy between theory and practice, against communist jargon, pomposity, and gloom. Hlasko's *Cemeteries,* a volume consisting of two long short stories, published in Paris in March 1958, is a landmark in the history of the literary thaw in Poland and deserves attention for more than purely literary reasons. Never before have the shortcomings and ruthlessness of communist administration in Poland been more strikingly portrayed or more critically presented; never before has the human degradation caused by these conditions been more movingly depicted or the voice of protest raised more strongly. 'You promised us life in a paradise and instead we find ourselves in the cemeteries of our hopes,' says one of the characters in *Cemeteries.* This is the story of a 'good communist,' who, under the influence of drink, got involved with the police, was arrested, and falsely accused of insulting the regime. Not only is his career wrecked, but his own life and his daughter's are irreparably ruined. *Next One For Paradise,* the second story, is about a group of lorry-drivers in a mountain district waiting for the arrival of new lorries to replace their derelict machines. One after another they are killed in accidents. Hlasko depicts them as human wrecks, victims of the regime.

Only the board of censors could give us some idea of the number and quality of the manuscripts they have refused publication. The

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official list of forthcoming publications announced, among others, a new novel by Leopold Tyrmand, *Seven Long Voyages*, for Spring 1958, but it did not appear. And only the censors could reveal the rules governing cuts imposed on works passed for publication after more or less drastic rewriting.

THE most striking feature of the literary scene in Poland as it emerges today from texts available in printed form and published in Poland, is its *changeability*. One can date most of the novels and short stories without the help of the titlepage. There are authors whose work in the black days of socialist realism was practically unreadable but who have made a fresh start and prove most promising. Names of once banned authors, such as Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz or Bruno Schulz, have come once more into the light and are influencing young writers. Some books published abroad years ago and only recently published in Poland (e.g. Kuncewiczowa's novels, Wankowicz's *Monte Cassino*) are given the kind of welcome usually associated with first editions and their authors are treated more or less as newcomers.

This applies not only to Polish authors. A rich selection of foreign books now fills the shelves of Polish bookshops. Kafka, Faulkner, Camus, Beckett, prohibited for years and practically unknown, have suddenly become fashionable and are widely imitated by young writers (such as Woroszylski) and their elders (such as Iwaszkiewicz). The Polish reading public turned virtually overnight from Balzac to Simone de Beauvoir, from Dickens to Hemingway, and Françoise Sagan became the idol of the young. The change in the official appreciation of modern authors given in popular weeklies and outlines of literature for schools, is no less striking and confusing.

Among writers there was an atmosphere of *constant expectation of change* long before October, and a surprising alertness for the suddenly opening possibilities. That is why in August 1955, when the chief Warsaw censor was on holiday, the editor of *Nowa Kultura* (later dismissed) was bold enough to persuade the censor's deputy to pass Adam Wazyk's *Poem for Adults*, a turning point in the history of the Polish thaw.

The first question facing the student of Polish literature is: How deep was the impact of socialist realism on writers and how far have they regained freedom of expression? Is the change irrevocable? The change of attitude is obvious and striking, especially when compared with Russia and other communist countries. One must, however, make some reservations. The technique of socialist realism has left a strong mark even on those writers who were most hostile to it. It is, for example, extremely difficult for a young writer to go outside a certain group of themes typical of socialist realist fiction. The most representative of the younger generation, Marek Hlasko, sticks in his deeply pessimistic short stories to the shortcomings of economic and political life, substituting black for white and despair for enthusiasm.

Another salient feature of the latest Polish literature is what may be described as the spontaneous revolt of the young generation, those born on the eve of the second World War, brought up and educated in communist-controlled schools and youth organisations. At the first opportunity they proclaimed their deep disappointment, their pessimism as against the official slogans, their hostility to those who have frustrated them. Influenced partly by American and French literature and films, they published their own periodical *Po Prostu*, gained access to many other widely read periodicals, took an active part in producing a series of Polish 'black' films, opened several excellent literary cabarets, etc. In spite of Poland's long isolation from the West, they show a surprising knowledge of modern philosophical trends and are deeply influenced by living Western writers.

Another relic of the Stalinist era is *the tendency to write in metaphors*. Both writers and the reading public acquired the habit of reading between the lines in order to understand the inner meaning of the given text. To appreciate any literary work one had to learn to detect, behind the smoke-screen of compulsory truisms, the true meaning of the author's words and his intentions. This habit became instinctive and automatic, and hardly interfered with the normal reception of the written word. But this

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attitude, born of the need to evade censorship, has had the peculiar effect of producing an atmosphere particularly favourable to the use of metaphors to achieve the equivocal and even misleading effects which might be useful in case of official disapproval. Authors trying to satisfy at one and the same time their conscience, the demands of the reading public, and the censor, use metaphors; the use of metaphor is, of course, a characteristic feature of modern poetry in any language. What is, however, done by Western writers to achieve purely artistic effects, has in Poland a political flavour and serves as an elaborate disguise.

Allegory, offering similar possibilities, is also a very popular form of writing. Several historical or biblical novels—and there are many of them in contemporary Polish literature—are based on incidents or situations bearing an unmistakeable resemblance to the present situation. Pure (or surrealistic) allegory is also a popular vehicle of expression to which the public readily responds. That is why the short story *Lament of a paper head,* by Jerzy Andrzejewski, which apeared first in a periodical, could not be reprinted in a collection of his short stories brought out before Gomulka came to power. It is the story of a Speaker who, in the middle of his Great Speech, suddenly sees that his audience are covering their heads with paper hats. This is the effect of his propaganda formulas. Later, in a mirror, he sees that he is wearing a paper hat too. Andrzejewski's short stories offer good examples of some other characteristic traits of contemporary Polish literature. Their end leaves the reader in doubt of the author's real intentions; at least two interpretations are possible. His *Golden Fox* is the story of a small boy persecuted by his less imaginative companions for inventing a dream-companion—a golden fox hidden in a wardrobe. The boy is brutally brought back to reality, rejects the dream, and joins the other boys in a noisy game with a clearly didactic communist meaning. Is it good or bad? When Torquemada's convert and disciple, Diego, slaps his dead master's face, is he avenging his own frustrated youth or condemning Torquemada's deathbed renunciation of his lifework? Readers of *Darkness Covers the Earth* have to answer for themselves.

ONE characteristic trait more. The positive heroes of socialist realism have vanished from the literary scene, but the need for contrasting pictures in black and white appears to have survived. An enthusiast has been replaced by a pessimist, wishful thinking by outspoken criticism. And a new *cliché* has come into fashion: a good communist unjustly persecuted for his noble deeds, bitterly disappointed but blaming for his misfortunes not communism or the communist party but bad interpreters of the doctrine. Dr. Victor Lewen in K. Brandys' *The Mother of the Króls,* and Franciszek Kowalski in Hlasko's *Cemeteries,* offer good examples of this new literary convention serving both communist and non-communist writers (although Kowalski, in the end, sees through his illusions).

The Mother of the Króls is the story of a working class widow whose communist friends and relatives are arrested—in pre-war Poland, during the German occupation, and in People's Poland. Victor Lewen, a '*good* communist,' is the type of the true believer persecuted by *bad* interpreters of the doctrine. Adam Wazyk's *Poem for Adults,* a spontaneous expression of dissatisfaction, also ends with an invocation to the Party (the Party which Wazyk later left).

Enthusiasts of the thaw hoped that the end of socialist realism would open a new era and encourage masterpieces born in the atmosphere of freedom. Whatever the reason, no masterpieces have emerged, but undoubtedly the general level of literary production has risen considerably and quickly. The urge to produce as early as possible works written in the new spirit prompted some authors to present their novels in half-finished form, as was the case with Leopold Tyrmand's *The Evil One* or Roman Bratny's *Columbuses, class 1920,* both of them vast, sketchy panoramas of the life of the young generation.

Poetry, paralysed by socialist realism and its requirements even more than prose, had to make a fresh start. And it did. New names, especially that of Miron Bialoszewski, a highly original surrealistic poet, are opening a new chapter in the history of Polish poetry. Those of the older generation, such as Aleksander Wat or Antoni Slonimski, have resumed writing and their poems have a mature beauty.

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The part played in Polish literary life by the older writers is worth special consideration. Some, like Maria Dabrowska, Jan Parandowski, and the late Leopold Staff (d. 1957) took no part in literary activities during the black years, spending them in self-imposed silence. As soon as circumstances permitted, they again came to the fore. Dabrowska's *Morning Star*, J. Parandowski's *The Sun-Dial*, and L. Staff's last poems are striking examples of integrity and dignity.

The middle-aged writers, more involved in the vicissitudes of political and social life, reacted to socialist realism in various ways according to the strength of their characters. Some now repent loudly their former sins, others adopt the neutral attitude of 'wait-and-see.' Some are bitterly attacked for their earlier shortcomings. Artur Sandauer's uncompromising indictment of A. Rudnicki's and J. Andrzejewski's writings seems inspired by the Old Testament. J. Zawieyski, a Catholic writer, advocates forgiveness and a fresh start. The eminent (and elderly) poet, Antoni Slonimski, accuses his younger colleagues of writing nonsense. Personal likes and dislikes play their part in these quarrels. Some *personae gratae* of the Communist regime, such as Stefan Zolkiewski, are spared because of their kindly treatment of persecuted colleagues during the black years.

The climate favours outbreaks of polemics and bitter quarrels. The meaning of philosophical and literary terms is painstakingly discussed. Historians of literature are fighting hard to bring about a radical change in the terms of reference of the omnipotent Institute for Literary Research and to promote literary studies undertaken from other than a Marxist point of view. The enigma of the origins of Polish literary language keeps two groups of scholars on non-speaking terms. This, however, may be considered as a sign of return to the normal peace time activities of writers and scholars all over the world.

IN spite of a few hopeful signs, however, the situation is far from normal. The feeling of insecurity and impending changes for the worse hampers writers. They cannot publish freely; periodicals to which they contribute are subject to constant official pressure and to the censors' whims. They cannot travel abroad as they choose, and even if they obtain the innumerable permits they are not allowed to take enough money with them and are dependent on friends or relatives in other countries.

All communication with the Western world is controlled by a censorship which not only inspects letters and manuscripts but seizes the contents of parcels containing printed matter not allowed to enter Poland. There are rumours from well informed circles that a number of titles of books by Western authors have been struck off the lists of forthcoming publications. The feeling of deepening isolation from the West is growing and depresses both the young and the older writers. After the long drought they are anxious not to lose that precarious illusion of freedom which they have cherished since October 1956.

The part played by Polish writers in these and subsequent events can hardly be exaggerated. The unprecedented popularity of literary weeklies such as *Nowa Kultura, Przeglad Kulturalny* or the Catholic *Tygodnik Powszechny*, gives them much influence on public opinion, and therefore any attempt to reduce this influence by restrictions arouses strong dissatisfaction and is interpreted as a manifestation of subservience to Russia.

In Russia, on the other hand, the Polish press, especially *Po Prostu* (while it lasted), *Nowa Kultura, Przeglad Kulturalny*, and popular illustrated magazines, when available, enjoy enormous popularity and are treated as tribunes of free thought. An effort to present to the Polish public (in the periodical *Opinie*) liberal trends in current Russian literature did not go far, but did give the Poles some translations from Pasternak, Martynov, Nagibin, Yashin, etc.

There is no doubt that Polish literature is carefully watched by Moscow, and that the behaviour of Polish writers, especially the young ones, displeases Mr. Surkov and his friends. They accuse Polish poets of formalistic leanings and young Polish writers of undue pessimism and misinterpretation of Marxist principles. *Literaturnaia Gazeta* bitterly attacked Hlasko and his followers, and this criticism was

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probably responsible for the withdrawal of Hlasko's books from the publishing lists.

While Russian classics, especially Dostoevsky, enjoy enormous popularity in Poland, translations of contemporary Russian novels (even Dudintsev's) are published largely for political reasons and later form the bulk of the remainders offered at reduced prices at book sales. Translations from Western authors, on the contrary, often disappear from the bookshops on the day of publication.

The 'angry young men' ('pryszczaci,' 'wsciekli') of Poland deserve a closer look. They describe themselves as representatives of a generation which is both excited by mankind's future prospects and, at the same time, the victims of its present shortcomings. They represent, as they put it, the drama of our epoch and are extremely anxious to free themselves from the nightmare of their present existence. Unlike their English counterparts, their pessimism is rooted in the ground of real experience. Political persecution, alcoholism, low living standards, the housing shortage, isolation from the world—these are factors promoting widespread feelings of depression or of revolt against all forms of humiliation and injustice.

Hlasko and his followers limit themselves to depicting the reality without drawing explicit conclusions. The young Catholics, influenced by Mounier and Marcel, try to find the answer in Christian existentialism. All are eagerly searching for a formula for happier living. They do not find it in communism.

THE literary periodicals published by students and young writers give evidence of their interest in literary theory, philosophy, problems of theatre and art, of film art, of music. They respond immediately to any stimulus coming from the West and are apt to imitate its intellectual fashions.

A pre-war critic, the late Karol Irzykowski, accused Polish writers of a tendency to imitate foreign models and even plagiarise them. This certainly is true of the great majority of the young Polish writers today, even of Hlasko. But underneath obvious external similarities to Hemingway, Faulkner, or Françoise Sagan, lies the tragic accumulation of bitter experience which these young writers try to communicate to the world. The authenticity of their sufferings and their courage in exposing the truth may one day produce works of great value.

Like other writers in the communist countries, Polish writers can as a rule make their living from writing. They can, however, seldom devote themselves wholly to literary activities of their own liking. In order to make both ends meet they have to rely rather on indirect literary income from radio, films, and lectures, and, in addition, they have commitments of all sorts such as meetings and congresses, conferences and discussions, regular contributions to literary periodicals, etc. As the latter are paid according to the number of words, the innate Polish bent to verbosity is lavishly expressed in endless displays of superficial erudition.

It is part of the ritual accepted all over the communist world to celebrate anniversaries of famous writers and to publish on such occasions innumerable plays, *vies romancées*, poems, etc., in their honour. The beneficial effects of such celebrations are balanced by the virtually compulsory character of the contributions to the glory of the Great Dead Man. They recall the panegyric literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with all its weaknesses. For writers it is, however, a stable and secure source of themes and of income.

Taken as a whole Polish literature today presents a very interesting subject for literary and sociological studies. During the long years of war and of almost total isolation from the world after the war, many Poles got accustomed to making a sensible use of books. Knowledge of the classics of national and world literature (especially French and English) became surprisingly wide; without risk of exaggeration one can say that Balzac and Stendhal are more widely read in Poland than in their own country. Chance meetings with young writers from Poland reveal them as extremely well-read and interested in books in the manner of the eighteenth century savants. And it is an unwritten law that a good reading public stimulates the appearance of better and better books. This explains why the general level of writing in Polish is steadily rising and reaching a good European standard.

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Zhdanovism Resurrected

ULBRICHT AND THE INTELLECTUALS

Heinz Kersten

AFTER the Hungarian crisis in the autumn of 1956 it soon became clear that the leaders of the SED (Socialist Unity Party) were determined to end the policy of relative liberalisation in cultural affairs inaugurated in East Germany, as elsewhere, after the twentieth congress of the Soviet Communist party. The plenary session of the central committee of the SED, held from 30 January to 1 February 1957, marked the starting point for a counter-offensive by the party against revisionists in art and science.

The forced resignation of the famous Leipzig philosopher Ernst Bloch, and the prison sentences imposed on the Harich group, got rid of the intellectual opposition to Ulbricht and served as a warning to their followers. From the middle of 1957 it became clear that the intention was not merely to revert to the pre-Twentieth Congress cultural policy but to go further back still, to the days preceding the 'new line' announced in June 1953.

An article in *Neues Deutschland*, the principal SED newspaper, on 27 August 1957 made this goal explicit. It dealt with a discussion in the SED central committee on 'socialist drama,' and gave express approval to the line followed in the 'period after the fifth plenary session of the central committee and the second conference of the SED, based on a vigorous ideological struggle for a socialist art, for the artistic representation of reality by the methods of socialist realism.' The decisions taken at those meetings were said to be still binding, although they had in the meantime been rejected even by the opponents of cultural liberalisation. The decision of the fifth plenary session was taken on 17 March 1951, and it concerned 'The struggle against formalism in art and literature, and for a progressive German culture.' It required all creative artists to study Marxism-Leninism, to uphold the 'classical cultural heritage' against 'American cultural barbarism,' to discard formalism and adhere to socialist realism. At the same time the SED proposed the establishment of the State Commission for artistic affairs, a body which was dissolved under pressure from the artists after the popular revolt of 17 June 1953. Thus the fifth plenary session of the SED central committee marked the beginning of a period of intense regimentation of the whole of cultural life by the SED.

Recently a number of party officials have recalled the decisions of 1951, providing a parallel with similar happenings in the Soviet Union. In Moscow, too, early in 1957, there were official party references to the Zhdanov decrees of 1948 on art and literature, which served as a model for the SED decisions in 1951. In East Germany today the policy which crippled all free artistic activity under the slogan of 'fighting formalism,' has been revived under the slightly changed slogan of a 'fight against bourgeois modernism and decadence.'

Clear expression was given to this trend at the 32nd plenary session of the SED central committee (10-12 July 1957), where the deputy Minister for Culture, Alexander Abusch, the central committee secretary for science and higher education, Kurt Hager, the secretary of the SED Leipzig district committee Paul Fröhlich (who has since been promoted to the central secretariat of the SED), and the writer Kuba (Kurt Bartel), all made violent attacks on the 'liberals' in East German cultural life. Their onslaught was directed in the first place against the university professors of literature, among whom Professor Kantorowicz (who escaped to West Germany shortly afterwards) and Professor Hans Meyer came in for particularly strong criticism because of their contemptuous attitude towards 'socialist literature.' This, incidentally, was the first time that reproaches were levelled against Johannes R. Becher, the Minister for Culture. Kuba accused his colleagues in the Writers' Union of dishonesty, and, like Abusch, made a sharp attack

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on the policy of publishing houses, which no longer distinguished between socialist and non-socialist literature in the works they issued. Abusch had the same complaint to make against theatre programmes, and Fröhlich uttered a warning in pure Zhdanovese, against 'smuggling western decadence in under the pretext that it was "modern drama".' At Kuba's suggestion the SED central committee set up a commission to examine 'the entire machinery of institutions for the distribution of literature,' including the Writers' Union, and decided to convene a conference on cultural affairs.

PREPARATIONS for the conference took the form of a large-scale campaign against the remnants of liberalisation in all spheres of cultural life. Small editions of modern western authors had been published—Hemingway, Faulkner, Cronin, Greene, Sartre, Remarque, Koeppen, Böll. This now came in for criticism in the SED press, and the plans for publishing other contemporary western authors had to be dropped, since in the opinion of the cultural officials they might exercise an undesirable influence on the minds of readers. Booksellers were reprimanded for not doing enough to push the sales of 'the socialist literature of today.' Nor were the East German writers themselves spared. 'Why do our leading writers so seldom deal with questions of socialist construction?' asked *Neues Deutschland*. But so far there has been no noticeable change.

As in publishing, the theatre also turned its attention chiefly to plays by western dramatists in the liberalisation period—Anouilh, Giraudoux, Sartre, Cocteau, Nash, Priestley, and Zuckmayer. In response to public preferences, entertaining plays were put on, while contemporary political plays by Soviet, East German, and East European authors took second place in the repertory. Fritz Erpenbeck, the leading SED critic and editor-in-chief of the theatrical magazine *Theater der Zeit*, which sets the tone, spoke of attempts by theatre managers to increase their takings by putting on more performances of shallow but 'more marketable' plays, of both domestic and foreign origin, instead of trying to improve the artistic and ideological level of their productions. He also accused them of indulging in 'interesting' experimental forms, without even raising the question of the ideological value or harmfulness of the plays presented. The Ministry for Culture in many cases amended the programmes drawn up for the 1957-58 theatrical season, but even so they failed to satisfy party requirements for a clear orientation towards contemporary socialist drama. There are a number of indications suggesting that in the coming season there will be a closer approximation to the SED's views on a suitable repertory.

The demand that the theatre help educate the public in the spirit of the regime 'in an entertaining fashion' has its parallels in other institutions. In recent years some cultural domains had managed to free themselves from politics. This was true of the greater part of the entertainment world where, after the 'new line' was introduced in 1953, the population was plentifully supplied with popular programmes. Among these was the music broadcast by the radio, which included a surprising amount of jazz and western hits, and in its serious programmes gave a fair amount of time to western modernists. This came in for a severe rebuke at the 32nd central committee meeting. Alexander Abusch insisted that 'it was intolerable to have the cultural section of the radio pursuing its own independent policy.' Since then it has been decreed that in the light music and dance band programmes of the radio music of western origin must not exceed 40 per cent. of the total broadcast time.

Attacks were also made on the state concert management committee (which has since been reorganised and 'purged'), and on a number of small private undertakings which arrange public musical performances. They were said to have made too frequent use of the services of West Berlin or West German artists. *Neues Deutschland* drew attention to the absence of 'party-mindedness' among entertainers and proposed that the examination 'of all institutions which influence thinking,' suggested by Kuba for literature, should be undertaken also 'in the little theatres and music halls where the rule is still "a laugh at any price".' *Sonntag*, the weekly publication of the Culture League, called for 'stirring entertainment and cabaret programmes to radiate a socialist spirit,' and wanted 'neutralist programmes, devoid of any

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sense of obligation, which make concessions to petty-bourgeois customs, reveal the influence of bourgeois ideology, and whenever possible introduce obscenities as well', to be forbidden. The same paper wanted variety programmes to contain 'a socialist message' and called on the circus clowns to 'deal with current political questions.' Exaggerations of this kind are a vivid reminder of the total politicalisation of cultural life in the heyday of Stalinism.

Films did not escape official displeasure. The magazine *Deutsche Filmkunst* wrote: 'What is lacking . . . is a sufficient number of works with a contemporary theme, which reveal the socialist and party views of their authors; it is these which should put their stamp on our socialist film productions and make up the greater part of its output.' The cinemas were criticised for showing too few socialist films, and the state film purchasing commission was instructed to apply stricter rules for the import of western films. The sole East German producing company, DEFA, was also hit by the new and sharper line; of the films made or planned in the liberalisation period some had to be changed, while the showing of others was forbidden. In the April 1958 issue of the SED theoretical journal *Einheit* Anton Ackerman, the head of the film department of the Ministry for Culture, violently denounced those western-influenced film producers who dwell on the negative aspects of East German life in their films but barely indicate the 'successes in the building of socialism.'

THE SED's efforts to restore the old line have naturally affected the plastic arts, particularly since modern tendencies were becoming marked and were accompanied by an unequivocal rejection of political commitment. Art exhibitions have been strongly attacked, art schools purged, and at meetings of factory workers organised by the authorities painters have been told what is wrong with their work. In June 1957 Herbert Sandberg, the editor-in-chief of *Bildende Kunst*, a monthly published by the Artists' Union, was dismissed, and this gave *Einheit* the opportunity to launch a vigorous attack on its previous policy, and to express its disapproval of the recent work of East German artists. The editorial board of *Bildende Kunst* was reprimanded for giving publicity to the work and ideas of 'anti-humanist and reactionary artists,' and for having 'virtually demobilised' artists by the discussion of modernity it had inaugurated. Sandberg was criticised, among other things, for having recommended young East German painters to 'follow the road taken by Polish artists,' without any statement of principle concerning the 'distortions' in some of their work.

Both the East German literary periodicals came in for severe criticism from the SED. In a number of articles in *Neues Deutschland* and *Sonntag* the periodical published by the Writers' Union, *Neue Deutsche Literatur*, was taken to task for neglecting socialist literature and favouring old bourgeois literature and new West German writing. *Neues Deutschland* remarked disapprovingly that the editorial board apparently 'did not want to lead, but to mediate.' At the conference on cultural questions Willi Bredel, a novelist and member of the SED central committee responsible for the literary periodical, accepted the criticism and agreed 'to reorganise the work of the editorial board.'

Once defects of this kind had been discovered in the journal of the Writers' Union—which, by dealing with the work of West German authors, might have hoped to exert some influence in the Federal Republic—it was inevitable that the periodical *Sinn und Form*, published every two months by the East German Academy of Arts, should come under fire from the SED; this was taken care of at the conference by Kurt Hager. Under its editor-in-chief Peter Huchel, a well known lyric poet, *Sinn und Form* had consistently maintained a high level, publishing contributions from writers with an international reputation. The new cultural policy inaugurated by the regime has pushed it into the background; what counts with the SED is its political performance.

In the discussion which went on before and during the cultural conference the possibility of a 'third way' was frequently debated—indicating how widespread that line of thought is among East German intellectuals—and decisively rejected. At a conference on cultural questions organised in Leipzig in October 1957 by the local SED committee the Leipzig

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University philosophy instructor, Heinrich Schwartze, spoke of a spot 'where, if it were attacked, we would be vulnerable.' He was referring, he said, to 'what is usually called humanitarian or ethical socialism.' 'There is no doubt,' Schwartze said, 'that "ethical" socialism has an attraction for those who create culture and those who are devoted to its creations. Even if it is true that it conceals a poison, that poison is nevertheless extraordinarily attractive.' To counter that attraction he advocated the eradication of any thought of 'a third way.' 'We must eliminate the third way, and what it implies, not only from our theoretical discussions, but from our private dreams. We must get it out of our heads, because it may distract us from the struggle and even go as far as to give direct help to the enemies of the working class.'

Another offence is the advocacy of 'ideological co-existence.' The kind of cultural policy pursued after 1953, represented by and large in the work of the Ministry for Culture under Becher, envisaged the integration of western and 'bourgeois' cultural influences. It had been regarded both as a concession to the wishes and needs of the population, and also as a means of facilitating the resumption of contacts with Western artists and intellectuals and so of opening up possibilities for operating throughout the whole of Germany. The SED has now taken a firm stand against such policies. Inside the country war has been declared on 'Western decadence,' and the external corollary is the rejection of all mediation, a theme that was emphasised again and again in the debates centred on *Neue Deutsche Literatur*.

IT was to be expected that the abandonment of the earlier cultural policy should have personal repercussions. At the 33rd session of the SED central committee, which immediately preceded the conference on cultural questions (16-19 October 1957), the top-level cultural bureaucrats like Becher, Hager, and Wandel criticised their own 'errors.' Becher, in particular, accused himself of weakness and lack of party-mindedness in his position as Minister for Culture. But while he nominally retained his post (in fact the Ministry has for a long time been run by Becher's first deputy Alexander Abusch), Paul Wandel, who from 1953 was the member of the SED central committee secretariat responsible for culture and education, became the scapegoat and was dismissed. That was rather surprising, for this old communist and Moscow emigré (who has since been appointed ambassador in Peking) had always appeared to follow the orthodox party line.

Nobody has yet been appointed to his former post. Instead the 33rd plenary session of the SED central committee decided to set up a commission for cultural questions, attached to the political bureau, headed by Alfred Kurella. This 63-year-old communist, who returned to Germany only in 1954 after twenty years as an emigré in the Soviet Union and in autumn 1955 was appointed director of the newly-founded Leipzig Literary Institute, has since the beginning of 1957 shown himself particularly hostile to 'bourgeois decadence and Western modernism' and has acknowledged his adherence to the principles of cultural policy elaborated in the decisions of the fifth central committee session in 1951. His appointment as the chief cultural party bureaucrat may therefore be taken as indicative of the trend of SED cultural policy. Its goal, according to a leading article by Kurella published in *Neues Deutschland* at the opening of the conference on cultural questions, is to bring about a 'cultural revolution,' as Lenin, in a situation similar to East Germany's today, demanded a cultural revolution in Russia.

The SED cultural conference which met in East Berlin on 23 and 24 October 1957 issued instructions for the accomplishment of this revolution. The major speech was given by Alexander Abusch. A programmatic statement of eight theses called for a continuation of 'the ideological offensive in favour of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism' and for 'discussions among writers, artists, scientists, and all cultural workers to explain and develop the new socialist morals and ethics,' for better propaganda on behalf of socialist works by press reviews, for a 'new system of literary propaganda and distribution of literature,' and for measures 'to make it impossible in the future for Western methods of relaxation to infiltrate radio and television, music, gramophone

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records, films, publishing, the plastic arts and theatrical repertories.' The theses further called for 'artistic agitation by special groups of players and popular ensembles . . . in the struggle to reach the second five year plan targets in coal, power, chemicals, and other vital industries,' and to further 'the socialist transformation of agriculture'; the methods of work in the Ministry for Culture and in the departments for cultural affairs of local and district councils were to be changed to suit the requirements of the ideological struggle and to further the party's cultural policy; finally, there were to be improvements in the educational work carried out by the party organisations operating in cultural associations and institutions.

A tone of criticism and self-criticism prevailed at the conference, as it had in the preliminary discussions. Typical of the atmosphere was the number of occasions on which speakers in the discussions called on the participants who had 'vacillated' in the weeks and months before the conference to admit their mistakes, and the challenge to those who criticised in general terms only to 'name names.' It was noticeable, however, that prominent speakers avoided doing so—no doubt to preserve at least an external show of unity, and to avoid driving well-known artists into still greater opposition to the SED.

But if the most prominent older writers were on the whole spared, one ambitious cultural bureaucrat of the SED, Hans Rodenberg, dealt at length with the oppositional tendencies among young artists which became apparent in 1956, and challenged them to answer the question: 'That was where you stood then. Where do you stand now?' The campaign against the young artists out of sympathy with the SED line was taken up after the conference by the communist state youth organisation FDJ, and culminated in March 1958 in the closing down of the East Berlin young artists' club, after scarcely one year of existence, during which time it had often been decried as 'the playground of the irresponsible petty-bourgeois.'

THE serious view taken by the regime of the opposition in the ranks of the young intelligentsia is also revealed by the SED's concern with the academic world. The universities and colleges are a particularly sensitive part of the East German educational system, a fact of which the rulers were reminded in the critical days of autumn 1956. As a result of events in Poland and Hungary unrest spread among the students of East Germany as it did in other countries. It can be seen from the discussions at the last meetings of the SED central committee that at the end of October 1956 Ulbricht and his followers feared the possibility of an open student rebellion in the East Berlin University. Since then the SED has carried on a sustained fight against all oppositional tendencies and moves towards relaxation, which were to be found not only among the students but also among the instructors. This was accompanied by the repeated demand for the 'socialist transformation' of the universities and colleges. The peak of the campaign was reached at the third SED conference on higher education, held in East Berlin from 28 February to 2 March 1958.

Since the appointment early in 1957 of Dr. Wilhelm Girnus, a well-known partisan of Ulbricht, to the post of State Secretary for Higher Education, a number of measures have been devised to promote the 'socialist education' of students. These include the virtual prohibition on travel to NATO countries, including West Germany, the introduction of one year's practical work before matriculation for all students in a nationalised industrial or agricultural concern, as well as work during vacations. At the conference it was announced that in future all students would have to take part in military exercises twice a month. It is unlikely that this will reduce opposition among the students; indeed, press reports suggest that opposition has grown.

Before and during the conference the party's attacks were directed primarily against the 'bourgeois ideology' that was said still to dominate the universities and colleges, and against the revisionism of a large number of academicians in almost all faculties, some even members of the SED. The situation in each of the faculties was subjected to critical examination by the SED, which drew up detailed programmes for their future work. These laid great emphasis on the interpretation of the curriculum in the light of dialectical materialism, and

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on greater concentration on current problems, particularly in the moral and social sciences. The SED party committees in the universities and colleges then drew up programmes of 'socialist transformation' embodying these demands; even non-political disciplines such as medicine and veterinary surgery were to have their curricula refashioned on ideological lines.

At the conference a few SED members accused of revisionist ideas, such as the economists Professor Behrens and Professor Kuczynski, took their turn at self-criticism, but even so they did not wholly satisfy the orthodox representatives of the party line, while others among the accused made no reply whatever to the charges against them. It was clear from a number of the contributions to the discussion, as well as from the speech of Kurt Hager, the central committee secretary, that many non-party professors and instructors resented party interference with the running of the universities. The uncompromising harshness with which, since the conference, the SED has tried to put its policy through in the universities, has already increased the number of East German university teachers seeking refuge in West Germany.

IN the drive to achieve this new, or rather old, cultural re-orientation the official organisation catering for the East German intelligentsia, the *Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands,* had its own part to play. The SED leaders had long wished to change it. Shortly after the popular revolt of 17 June 1953 this association put forward disquieting demands for greater freedom in the arts and sciences, and after the twentieth Soviet Communist party congress it again came out in favour of some liberalisation in East Germany. Its weekly magazine *Sonntag,* whose editors Gustav Just and Heinz Zoeger received prison sentences in connexion with the Harich affair, served as the mouthpiece for all such sentiments; in the same way the association's publishing house, run by Walter Janka and Wolfgang Harich, was a centre of oppositional elements.

The destruction of this group was the first step in 'cleaning up' the association, in which, according to the SED, 'an atmosphere of political neutralism and ideological co-existence' had spread. The accusation was made not only against the local branches of the *Kulturbund,* and their affiliated associations of naturalists, philatelists, photographers, etc., all aspiring to greater independence. In the governing council itself, filled as it was with SED officials, many members failed to co-operate in putting across the new and sharper cultural line. The SED reprimanded them, for example, for failing to take a stand on the views of the Leipzig professor of philosophy, Bloch, who was accused of counter-revolutionary tendencies. The clubs run by the *Kulturbund* were also criticised for their unorthodox activities.

A reorientation in the entire work of the *Kulturbund* was envisaged in the debates which preceded its fifth congress, held from 7 to 9 February 1958 in East Berlin. At the congress Minister for Culture Becher made a speech that adhered strictly to the line, and outlined the new tasks of 'socialist cultural policy' confronting the association, now renamed *Deutscher Kulturbund,* which brings it into complete subjection to the SED. The end of this phase of development in the history of the *Kulturbund* was underlined even more emphatically by a change in its leadership. Johannes R. Becher, who had been its President since its foundation on 8 August 1945, was replaced by Max Burghardt, manager of the East Berlin Opera, who is a candidate member of the SED central committee, and himself accepted the post of honorary president. Thus Becher, who was in charge of all cultural affairs since the 'new line' was adopted in 1953, a line now revised, is pushed into the background. He no longer plays a noteworthy part in political life.

Since these conferences and congresses, which served as landmarks in the process of the reorientation of cultural policy (and the many more numerous smaller meetings and events of a similar nature), the pace of retrogression has been steadily hastened. Once again, in all spheres of cultural life, there prevails an atmosphere which in many ways recalls the worst features of Stalinist dictatorship over the arts. In this respect East Germany is probably the most conservative state in the entire Eastern bloc.

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SOCIALIST LEGALITY: SOVIET AND YUGOSLAV

Ivo Lapenna

THE question of so-called 'revolutionary' or 'socialist' legality, revived at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956, had come up six years earlier, in connection with the Stalin-Tito conflict. It was, and still is, a prominent feature of this conflict, but the idea is not a new one. It can be found in the very earliest stages of the Russian and, later, the Yugoslav revolution.

In November 1917, the Soviet authorities called for the establishment of 'the strictest revolutionary order.' The day after the revolution the All-Russian Congress of Soviets called upon officials and the people 'to observe the laws very strictly.' The party conference of December 1921 underlined the need of 'strengthening the strict principles of revolutionary legality in all spheres.' In 1922, Lenin himself, on the occasion of the founding of the Soviet Procuracy, wrote that this legality 'must be a single All-Russian one, and must be uniform for the whole federation of Soviet Republics.'

In December 1922, in April 1923, in April 1925, in March 1930, and on other occasions, the party or state organs repeatedly noted violations of legality, and called for observance of the laws. The decree of 15 June 1932 which was intended to strengthen the legal position of the kolkhoz system that had just been established by force, again noted 'the existence of a still considerable number of violations of revolutionary legality on the part of officials.' Instructions were issued to the courts and to the procuracy to prosecute all officials violating workers' rights, and in particular to deal with cases of illegal arrest, search, confiscation, etc. Needless to say, this decree, like those that preceded it, remained ineffective; direct, arbitrary police suppression and terror continued to be used, in the villages as well as in the towns, with greater or less intensity according to circumstances. The Soviet Constitution of 1936 also formally proclaimed the principle of strict observance of the law; the presidium of the Supreme Soviet was empowered to repeal all decrees and other acts of the government of the Soviet Union and the federal republics which did not conform to the laws. But there has never been any question of the Supreme Soviet cancelling the decrees of the Soviet government.

In the long series of acts concerning legality, the decree of 19 September 1946 must not be overlooked. Noting a great number of 'serious violations' of the provisions concerning the kolkhozy, the government and the Central Committee 'decisively condemned these violations,' and directed that the culprits were to be punished as 'criminal offenders.' The decree formally provided for the responsibility of all executive organs to all higher organs and to the representative bodies which elected them; for the independence of the courts; for the election and removal of judges. The procuracy was to supervise the observance of the law, and provision was made for other types of supervision, chiefly that of the Party.

With so many constitutional, legal, and other guarantees, one would expect to find a regime of perfect legality. Unfortunately no provision was made for supervising the supervisors.

IN Yugoslavia, from the war until the middle of 1949, the concept of legality was essentially identical with that of the Soviet Union. 'Revolutionary legality' was emphasised as one of the instruments of the revolution. The 'people's courts,' which had first sprung into existence during the war, were almost identical with their Soviet prototypes. The public prosecutor's office corresponded to the Soviet procuracy. The Yugoslav UDB corresponded to the Soviet Special Branch of NKVD (afterwards MVD).

After 1948, Yugoslav criticism of the entire Soviet system could not long ignore similar problems closer home. Seeking 'its own road

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to Socialism,' Yugoslavia also came up against the problem of legality. A. Rankovic's report to the Central Committee of the party on 3 June was decisive in this connection.

In it he emphasised that the legal system then in force had proved satisfactory, but that in the new circumstances, when 'powerful and bold strides towards the transfer of the management of the economy into the hands of the direct producers themselves' were being made, it was necessary to bring the judiciary into line with this new movement in the country's social life. He then drew attention to a series of weaknesses, setbacks, and mistakes.

Not only the organs of the UDB (the secret police) and the public prosecutors, but the courts, too, tended to convert ordinary crimes into political offences. There were many cases in which petty offences were treated as sabotage. Others, such as personal insults to the president of a local people's committee, were construed as counter-revolutionary offences, i.e., as criminal offences 'against the people and the state,' and punished by several years' imprisonment. The defendant's rights were not taken into account. The defendant's plea that he could not possibly have committed the offence with which he was charged 'is often not investigated by the court, such a defence being simply declared to be "unfounded".' Many judgments were rendered with complete disregard for the evidence of the defence witnesses. There were many examples of the courts accepting the statements contained in the indictment regardless of evidence to the contrary. Equally frequent were cases in which too much importance was attached to the defendant's confession, irrespective of other evidence. There was the case of one defendant who claimed that he had not been, nor could have been, the perpetrator of the offence, but the court rejected his defence, contending that 'The accused has in no way proved that he has not committed the offence with which he is charged.' Even more characteristic in this respect, said Rankovic, was the example of a court 'which places such trust in the confession obtained during the investigation that it considers the retraction of such a confession during the trial as a criminal offence.'

Other cases of unlawfulness in the field of criminal law were: the meting out of punishments not specified by the law, disrespect for the provisions of criminal procedure, refusal to hear witnesses for the defence, punishments for 'collaboration with the enemy' of persons who, during the occupation, were imprisoned in the invader's concentration camps, and 'total confiscation,' a penalty which is not to be found in the law. There were frequent cases of judgments made after previous agreement with the public prosecutor ('so as to satisfy the public prosecutor'), with the organs of the UDB, or party organs. A president of a district court declared: 'I have agreed with the prosecutor to hand down such a judgment in this case.' Rankovic said explicitly: 'The people's committees, the offices of the public prosecutors and the local party agencies have tried, sometimes with success, to turn the law courts into their executive organs.'

And elsewhere: 'Hence the mistaken concept that a judge who "obeys" and works in accordance with the instructions and wishes of the administration and of the local organs is a good and politically trustworthy judge.'

The secret police, recruited exclusively from the most faithful and disciplined members of the party, also had, according to Rankovic, 'great weaknesses.' He recognised that unjust, arbitrary, and illegal actions by individual UDB organs had 'greatly damaged its reputation.' According to the report, in 1949 alone 47 per cent. of the total number of arrests made by the UDB were unjustified.

But even among the remaining 53 per cent., considered legal, there was a great number of cases in which the UDB illegally exceeded its authority. In the same year, 1949, 23 per cent. of the arrests carried out by UDB organs involved minor general offences. The UDB had investigated these cases although this was the job of the ordinary police (militia) or of the public prosecutor's office. There were cases—very infrequent, according to Rankovic—of confessions extracted by force. Rankovic recognised that 'certain UDB organs have not sufficiently grasped that a sound knowledge of and a strict adherence to all laws and prescriptions is called for in all their actions and activities, for the UDB by no means stands above the law. . . .'

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IN the sphere of civil law, the violation of legality was less noticeable. The gravest errors were made in the field of matrimony, parent-children relationships, inheritance, and cases involving property, particularly when the state was concerned. Nor was the law applied uniformly. In many cases the courts granted divorces too readily, while in others they insisted on formally protracting marriages which had really been non-existent for years.

Abundant violations of the law occurred in the villages, especially in connection with collectivisation, and the rights of urban workers were also ignored. The courts, for instance, 'often rejected justified claims on the part of insured persons under the social insurance scheme,' or neglected other legally guaranteed workers' rights. Illegal acts involved the election and removal of judges, and occurred in the administration, in the public prosecutors' offices, in the police, and in the work of the people's committees—in fact throughout the entire apparatus.

Rankovic attributed these unlawful procedures to the lack of legal regulation in several important spheres, the ignorance of officials, the small number of judges and their inadequate salaries, the general neglect of the courts and the undermining of their authority.

Among the measures proposed in the report —and afterwards accepted—for 'strengthening legality,' the most important were: (1) Closer definition of the conditions for electing judges and especially for removing judges, to make them more independent; (2) strengthening of the courts, particularly of the supreme courts of the Republics, by 'professional and politically developed cadres'; (3) raising judges' salaries; (4) bringing the courts nearer to the people by extending the authority of the regional courts and of the supreme courts of the Republics; (5) the Supreme Court to hear appeals only on important questions, and to ensure uniformity in the application of the law; (6) the offices of the public prosecutors should no longer carry out investigations, which should, in principle, be transferred to the courts; (7) elimination of all 'mistaken conceptions' about the hierarchy of state institutions, 'in which the courts have a lower status'; (8) extension of the authority of the courts and 'their guarantee of citizens' rights in relation to the illegal acts of the administration'; (9) citizens to have the right to appeal to the courts directly in all questions of administrative acts affecting their rights (previously this was possible only through the public prosecutor's office, which acted as it saw fit); (10) improving the quality and status of the legal profession, because 'the idea of lawyers as assisting organs of the state leads to bureaucracy and inactivity on the lawyer's part and prejudices defence and protection of the rights of the citizen and of institutions.' It is necessary to point out that prior to Rankovic's report the official Party line was precisely that lawyers were assistants of the court. Lawyers were frequently attacked publicly when they attempted to provide an effective defence.

All these measures, however, were to be applied with the object of establishing, or, as the official terminology put it, 'strengthening,' not legality as such, but 'socialist' legality. 'Some people think that the strengthening of the authority of the courts, the encouragement of lawfulness and the spreading of socialist democracy also means appeasement in the struggle against the enemies of socialism. . . . Such ideas are a great mistake and illusion . . . On the contrary, such courts, which will have great authority and will base their activities firmly on the law, will be and must be the severest and most merciless enemies of those fallacious ideas which harm the socialist community and endanger its existence.'

BETWEEN June 1951 and April 1958 many changes took place in the economic, social, constitutional and legal structure of Yugoslavia. Legislative activity was considerably intensified, and greater systemisation introduced into several branches of the law and the legal system as a whole. In respect to codification, Yugoslavia has so far surpassed the Soviet Union. The courts and the public prosecutor's offices have also been reorganised, though the fundamental principles remain the same. All this represents progress in comparison with the earlier situation and with the chaos which still reigns in this field in the Soviet Union; there a veritable legal jungle has arisen from the innumerable laws, ukases, decrees, orders,

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instructions, etc., frequently altered and often unpublished. It should be emphasised that two important concepts relating to the principle of legality in criminal law—the concept of analogy and that of a 'socially dangerous action'—have been partially modified. According to the concept of 'material crime,' on the basis of which many persons have been condemned (in Yugoslavia as well) to severe punishments, a crime is not only the concrete illegal deed, defined as a crime in law, but every 'socially dangerous act.' Naturally, the degree of 'social danger' of the act is determined by the court, which as an 'executive organ' depends in practice on the public prosecutor and party agencies for its decision. The concept of 'material crime' opened the door to illegality—to punishment not in accordance with the law, but with the instructions of various 'political and social' organisations. The new Yugoslav Criminal Code (art. 2) excludes this concept in regard to punishment.

Despite these improvements, the official attitude to the concept of socialist legality remained essentially unchanged. At the last congress of the League of Communists, which took place in April 1958 at Ljubljana, J. Hrncevic, president of the Federal Supreme Court, again touched on the question of 'socialist legality.' While much progress had been made, and cases of conscious violation of the law on the part of state organs were now infrequent, the limits of legality were once again defined when he warned all those out of sympathy with the present regime that 'our socialist democracy does not allow, and cannot allow, various traitors and servants of foreign reactionaries to abuse the liberties which the law gives them in order to realise their own anti-socialist aims or those of certain foreigners.'

It is precisely here, namely in the word 'socialist,' that the essence of the whole problem of 'socialist' legality lies.

IN the Soviet Union, the discussion of 'socialist legality' was reopened immediately after Stalin's death. Thus R. E. Orlovski was writing of the role of 'socialist legality' in the 'construction of communism' by the end of 1953. Articles on the application of the law appeared in almost every issue of the chief legal journal *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo,* and elsewhere during 1954 and 1955. In *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo* (1955, No. 5), N. G. Aleksandrov asserted that the 'socialist state' requires of everyone, without exception, including all officials, 'unconditional and strict observance of the laws.' In the same year he published his book *Legality and Legal Relations in Soviet Society,* which abounded in praise of Soviet 'socialist legality' as the only 'true legality,' guaranteed by the Soviet state which 'by its very essence does not and cannot tolerate unlawfulness from any person whatever.'

S. N. Bratus said later that Aleksandrov's book contained 'a certain amount of embellishment of our reality, so characteristic of many books published in former years on law, philosophy, history and economy.' This criticism, it need hardly be said, dated from the period following the 20th Party Congress. Discussion based on a more realistic recognition and analysis of the facts began only after the Congress had approved the 'strengthening of Soviet legality' and insisted on the necessity of its being rigorously observed. The Congress also heard Khrushchevs' secret report, in which he admitted the crimes of the regime:

'Many thousands of honest and innocent communists,' said Khrushchev, 'have died as a result of this monstrous falsification of such "cases".' Stalin himself pushed the 'NKVD workers on to the path of falsification, mass arrests and executions.' Not only the NKVD and the procuracy, but the examining magistrates as well, participated in the false accusations. Khrushchev cited the example of a judge who declared at the Central Committee Presidium session: 'I was told that Kosior and Chubar were people's enemies and for this reason I, as an examining magistrate, had to make them confess that they were enemies.'

Although Khrushchev revealed only a small part of the prevalent lawlessness, and this only in so far as it concerned party members, his speech had a great effect on the status of Soviet law. Writers began to examine the whole situation a little more seriously. Here, very concisely, are instances of the lawlessness they revealed,

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in some respects strikingly similar to those found earlier in Yugoslavia:

The most frequent and most serious cases occurred in the sphere of criminal law, particularly in political cases, which were linked with the illegal activities of the secret police and the procuracy. The principle of assuming the defendant's innocence until his guilt is proved was not observed in the courts. 'The assumption of innocence is no fiction,' wrote Rakhunov in *Kommunist* (1956, No. 7) 'but the expression of legality in a criminal suit. Nevertheless this principle was not observed, and in many cases the accused was treated as a criminal merely on the basis of the charge against him. . . . The accused is indeed not obliged to prove his innocence.'

On the other hand, legality was also violated in the acceptance by the courts of confessions as valid proof. According to Vyshinsky, confessions, even if made during investigation, constitute sufficient proof, if not in ordinary criminal cases, then certainly in political ones. Rakhunov asserts that this exception in the case of political crimes has no basis in law. It is now generally accepted in theory that confession is not sufficient proof of guilt. 'In practice,' writes *Kommunist*, 'confessions are shown to be false in many cases.' Although article 136 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the RSFSR and corresponding articles in the other procedural codes specify a penalty of five years' imprisonment for the extraction of confessions by force, it was never implemented.

IT is now recognised that much evil resulted from Vyshinsky's theory that the court can condemn on the basis of mere 'probability.' This attitude is incorrect and the discovery of the full material truth is necessary, writes *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo*. And *Kommunist* (1956, No. 7) rejected several of Vyshinsky's erroneous theses, particularly his view that the court does not need to discover the objective truth, but may judge solely on the basis of the 'maximum probability' that the defendant perpetrated the crime of which he is accused; 'However great the "probability" may be, it is nonetheless not objective truth, and, consequently, Vyshinsky's thesis leads in fact to violations of legality.'

A further source of unlawful acts was the application of analogy. This is made possible by the criminal codes themselves, which explicitly permit it. Now analogy has been discarded in theory but the articles in the criminal codes remain. The courts, including the Supreme Court, had also meted out punishments not laid down by the law.

The promotion system also contributed to the evil. Examining magistrates were regarded the more highly, the greater the number of cases they submitted to the court. Cases closed at the investigation stage and not submitted to the court were not included in recommendations for promotion. The rights of the defence were violated and the lawyers' profession held in disrespect. The press did not fulfil its role: 'Unfortunately,' *Kommunist* complains, 'in our press the true role of the Soviet defence counsel is distorted, for he is represented as a "patron" of the criminal.'

All the crimes of the NKVD (MVD) were blamed on the 'Beria gang' which 'the Party destroyed'—arbitrary imprisonment, torture, killing, falsification of documents, the staging of 'conspiracies,' etc. The procuracy, which not only by the new decree of 14 May 1955, but also by the previous one of 1933, was obliged to supervise the observance of the law by all administrative organs, did not do so. Supervision by the procuracy must be increased and strengthened, wrote *Kommunist*, as a guarantee of legality, but did not add that unlawful acts were frequently committed in the procuracy itself. Prof. Strogovich, no doubt with this in mind, was not satisfied by this 'strengthening of procuracy supervision,' but demanded judicial guarantees of legality, so that the authority of the courts can be extended to include questions of an administrative nature. Strogovich further proposed that suits for redress against the state be permitted in cases of illegal arrest and conviction.

There was also a demand for increasing the rights of the defence, particularly for authorisation to represent the accused at the investigation stage, and to plead before the Supreme Court of the USSR, the supreme courts of the republic and the presidia of the regional courts.

Finally, R. A. Rudenko, the procurator-general, in a ten-page article in *Sovetskoe*

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Gosudarstvo i Pravo (1956, No. 3), emphasised the importance for the establishment of legality, or, as he put it, for the 'strengthening of socialist legality,' of the abolition of the Special Board of the MVD.

Examples given of cases in civil law where legality was violated included unjustified expulsion from the kolkhozes, violation of labour relations, unlawful extension of the working day, neglect of the legal rights of inventors, etc.

ONE of the important causes of these numerous aspects of unlawfulness in all spheres of life is generally considered to be the obsolescence of many laws. For example, the civil code adopted in the 1920s still remains in force, though it is quite out of date in many respects. Labour laws are obsolete. Many regulations promulgated during the war 'under the pressure of circumstances' still remained in force after the war was over. The number of normative acts is so great that even jurists specialising in some branch of law are no longer able to find their way in the jungle of regulations. Ignorance of the existing law, not only on the part of ordinary citizens but also on the part of the responsible officials, is profound.

A further cause is the obscurity of the existing laws. Although *Forty Years of Soviet Law*, published in 1957, emphasises that Soviet laws are 'exceptionally clear, precise and comprehensible to the wide mass of the people' (vol. II, p. 45), it is admitted a few pages later that the legal prescriptions are set out in 'complicated, obscure language' (p. 51). In addition, laws and other normative acts contradict one another.

Finally, Soviet jurisprudence is reproached for not occupying itself with a study of legal practice, and for not revealing violations of legality. Naturally, *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo* immediately recognised the 'imperfections and errors' of Soviet legal science, but explained at the same time that they had met with objective difficulties precisely because normative acts had quite simply not been published, and statistics and other information were not available, so that in many respects it was not possible to observe the actual application or non-application of laws and legal provisions.

Simultaneously with these criticisms, several changes were made. The partially reorganised procuracy was instructed to attend more strictly to the observance of the law; the Supreme Court was reorganised; the acts of 1940 which bound the workers to their place of employment were repealed. A step forward was taken in the establishment of a Legal Commission to codify the law, and to co-ordinate all laws, regulations, decrees, etc., so that they no longer contradict each other. The Commission has prepared drafts for the basic civil and criminal codes, as also for the codes of civil and criminal procedure. However, this legislative work still lags behind what has already been done in Yugoslavia.

THE concept of 'socialist' legality is indissolubly linked to other fundamental tenets of the theory of state and law in the Soviet Union, as in Yugoslavia.

There is first of all the question of the nature of legality and law as a whole in the so-called transition period when, according to Marx, the state should begin to wither away. If this should indeed take place, then obviously law would lose its value, and the significance of the principle of legality diminish. During the first post-revolutionary period in the Soviet Union the theory of the withering away of the state and of law reigned supreme. Law, it was asserted, was 'a bourgeois form, which can be filled with no Socialist content' (Pashukanis); the Soviet state did not require legislation, but an efficient and inexpensive administration run by intelligent and honest officials (Gurvich), etc. Nevertheless from 1929 on such concepts were rejected with growing emphasis. Stalin propounded the thesis that the state would wither away not through its weakening, but through its reinforcement. Today the problem is 'solved' by postponing the withering away of state and law to the distant future. According to present-day theories, both Soviet and Yugoslav, state and law retain their full value in the 'transition period.'

The second question relates to the dictatorship: how is it possible to speak of legality under a dictatorship which, according to Lenin (Works, xxvii, p. 216), is bound by no laws, not even those created by itself? M. A. Reisner, an outstanding theorist of the first years of the Soviet regime, wrote in 1925 that

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law is unnecessary since the dictatorship fulfils all the social tasks of the transition period. 'Of what use is legal regulation,' he asked, 'if we are fully conscious of our class interests and the technical means of realising them?' He was answered a few years later by Vyshinsky: 'The dictatorship of the proletariat does not exclude the legal regulation of social relations, but inevitably postulates it.' Again, according to Vyshinsky, the dictatorship is 'a power bound by no law,' but, 'constructing its own laws, it utilises the laws, requires obedience to the laws, punishes for disobedience to the laws.' In other words, when the laws are suitable they are fully utilised to the concrete ends of the dictatorship, but the organs of dictatorship are not themselves bound by them. The results of this conception of legality have already been described.

Lastly, the third problem, in its essence touched on only very cautiously by the theory, is that of the legality of the laws themselves. If, that is to say, law is an expression of the will of the ruling class, which in the two countries is theoretically equated with the whole working class (dictatorship of the proletariat), then a law which does not correspond to this essential element of the definition of law must be considered to be contrary to law. The answer is usually given in the simple formula that 'socialist laws' do indeed express 'the will of the working masses,' 'correspond to the basic interests of the people,' and so on. A slightly more original explanation—corresponding rather more closely to reality—of the nature of the said will and the manner of its 'formation' is provided by N. G. Aleksandrov. He says that 'the Communist Party *organises* and *directs* the will of the working class, which carries out the state guidance of society, and of its ally the peasantry, a will defined in the last resort by the economic position of those classes' (*Legality and Legal Relations in Soviet Society, Moscow,* 1955, p. 35).

From the viewpoint of formal law it is emphasised in both countries that all power, including the legislative power, is concentrated in the representative organs (Supreme Soviet and National Assembly); these being 'most freely and democratically elected,' the law expresses the will of the great majority.

WITH the three theoretical questions thus answered, there remained, still unsolved, the problem of legality, its meaning and its application in practice. Irrespective of the question of whose will lies behind the law, there remains the further question of whether it must be strictly obeyed by all, including those who exercise the dictatorship, or whether the concept of Lenin, of Stalin, and of Vyshinsky is still valid.

In both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia there were some to urge the necessity of a rigorous and precise implementation of the laws in all circumstances. In the Soviet Union Prof. M. S. Strogovich is the most outstanding exponent of this concept. He has sharply criticised every 'elastic' reading and interpretation of the law, particularly that of Prof. A. J. Denisov, according to whom the law must be 'dialectically' applied as circumstances require. Strogovich emphasises that every such interpretation leads in fact to unlawfulness. Speaking in this connection of 'purposefulness' in the application of law, he says that it can only mean the application to a given case of 'definite measures permitted by the law, based on the law and in conformity with it, but in no wise abandonment of the law, going beyond the law, violation of the law.' Implementation of the law is the protection of citizens' rights, while the violation of citizens' rights is at the same time violation of legality. Strogovich defines legality thus:

'Soviet legality is the precise and firm observance and execution of the Soviet laws by all organs of the Soviet state, by all institutions and social organisations, by all officials and citizens of the USSR' (*Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo,* 1956, No. 4). A similar definition had previously been provided by P. E. Orlovski, according to whom: 'The essence of socialist lawfulness consists in the firm and constant adherence to and execution of Soviet laws on the part of all the organs of the Soviet state, institutions, organisations, persons in office and citizens' (*Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo,* 1954, No. 3).

An analogous concept is also found in Yugoslav theory. Prof. S. Frank, dealing with the problem of analogy in criminal law, says: 'There exists only one social concept of

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analogy: the concrete act must be similar to the legal description of the act and in conformity with the meaning of the law, with the *ratio legis*. Only thus can the creation of new criminal-law provisions by means of analogy be prevented. In this respect, we think of analogy as a category of logic, as one of the forms of thought, and not as a political concept, a method of creating law and permitting arbitrariness on the part of the judge, that is, of the party, as in Fascist states. In the latter sense analogy is nothing but a ruse for excluding the principle of legality and for transforming acts not punishable under the law into allegedly dangerous acts' (*Teorija Kaznenogo Prava*, 1955, p. 76).

IT does not follow that in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia the principle of legality in the usual sense of the word is now quite simply accepted, without any limitations implied by the differentiating addition of 'socialist' or 'revolutionary.' If this were so, theory in both lands would approximate closely to the concept of a state under the rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*), which is in fact violently rejected as a 'bourgeois, anti-scientific concept, presenting the bourgeois state as though there were no room in it for arbitrariness of the executive power, and as though law and legality prevailed therein.'

The concept of legality, extensively dealt with and still discussed in theory, remains, then, still linked with the 'construction of Socialism' in Yugoslavia, and with the 'construction of a Communist society' in the Soviet Union, and in this sense it is still called 'socialist legality' in both countries.

Prof. J. Djordjevic, for example, wrote that 'lawfulness may not be equated with dogma . . . it is not and must not be the manifestation of a new social cult, the cult of law for law's sake . . . lawfulness is not an end in itself, but the purpose of a definite social ideology and practice.'

In his speech of 14 January 1953, Tito emphasised that judges and prosecutors must 'constantly bear in mind the interests of the entire social community; they must protect the civil rights of indivduals, always bearing in mind that the interests of the community stand above all else; they must understand the spirit of revolutionary socialist development and secure a normal revolutionary social progress through the correct application of the law.' In 1951 Rankovic wrote that the courts maintain legality not from ' a desire for abstract justice; rather the laws contain the most important elements which equip the courts to participate in their own way in carrying out the tasks shared by the entire socialist community, by all its organs and by every right-minded citizen.'

In the Soviet Union 'socialist legality' is described in *Yuridicheski Slovar* (1956) as one of the 'basic methods of realising the dictatorship of the proletariat,' and as 'a powerful means of carrying out the tasks of socialist construction.' In *Forty Years of Soviet Law* (1957) 'socialist legality' is understood only within the framework of the 'purpose and official role' of law in the entire system.

There exists, then, no difference between the former and the present concepts of 'socialist' legality. The dissimilarity concerns not the concept itself, but the changed situation to which it is applied. During the revolution in Russia and in Yugoslavia 'revolutionary' legality was designed to assist the victory of the revolution, which naturally limited legality in favour of revolutionary objectives. Later, 'socialist' legality was made to serve current political ends, with results clearly recognised in Rankovic's report and in Khrushchev's speech to the 20th Congress. Finally, in Yugoslavia since 1949, the operative word 'socialist' indicates that legality must serve the country's 'own road to socialism', while in the Soviet Union it is to serve the 'new party line' inaugurated by the 20th Congress. Thus legality as such is limited by the political ends implicit in the notion of 'socialism' as understood in the two countries. It is because the regime in Yugoslavia is less severe than before 1949, and because several important questions have now been regulated by law that the element of legality in the notion of 'socialist legality' can now take on a more significant role than formerly, and operate more effectively than in the Soviet Union at the present time. The recent deterioration of Soviet-Yugoslav relations is bound to accentuate the contrast.

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GEORG LUKACS: AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY

III. Relativism and Class Consciousness

Morris Watnick*

WHAT is one to make of Lukacs' *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (History and Class Consciousness) today? And better still, to what purpose? Lukacs' pique aside, why indeed ruminate on a version of Marxism long repudiated with such finality by its own author and by the very movement for which it was intended? Surely, the ambivalence of a mind beset by the logic of its own commitment is hardly unique to Lukacs, much less a reason for pondering its argument anew or for confronting it with the actualities of Communist power today. If so, why not simply write it off as a closed chapter in the early history of internal Communist politics, and nothing more?

Easy as it is to take this view—and, for the most part, it carries a ready plausibility in the English-speaking world—it is one that seriously misjudges the pervasive influence of the book on the most varied schools of current European thought and, what is perhaps more to the point, its enduring pertinence to the messianic dynamism of the Communist appeal.

To take its influence first, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* had too much of the virtue of its defects as a *Parteischrift* to suffer oblivion. What saved it from becoming a mere item of antiquarian interest or, at most, the occasion for a psychological case study, were the very 'deviations' that have singled out Lukacs for over a generation, and in most cases *malgré lui*, as one of the few Marxists of Communist affiliation still worth studying for his own sake.

A good case in point is the new philosophical dimension his book added to the understanding of Marx's economic reasoning. Not that the conventional approach to the subject thereby lost its vogue; on the contrary, most economists in the English-speaking world, whether pro or con, continue to think of Marx's economics in their own positivistic terms and, given the assumptions of an autonomous science, can even argue cogently for their selective approach. What they cannot do—not since the publication of Lukacs' book, that is—without throwing the origin and meaning of Marx's economic doctrine out of focus, is to hold with Schumpeter that it was strictly the product of the classical Ricardian tradition and entirely *Hegelfrei*.[1] For it was Lukacs who not only rediscovered Marx's general intellectual debt to Hegel (something most Marxists had themselves slighted for over a generation), but who also succeeded in recasting his economic ideas as an elaborate 'philosophical anthropology'—or what English idiom would call a humanist social philosophy—permeated throughout by Hegelian categories of thought.

For all that, it would be claiming too much for Lukacs to suggest that he 'discovered' Hegel in Marx *de novo*. Others had preceded him in this, but without being as perceptive about the specific links between the two. Lukacs owed his greater success to his own intellectual needs. The process of conversion is seldom, if ever, a clean break with the past, and when Lukacs turned to Marxism during the first World War, he did so not only as a Hegelian but also, and more compellingly, as one who had to find in both systems a new and common framework for his pre-Marxist aesthetic humanism, with all its disdain for the 'alienated' existence of modern man.

As it happened, he could find that disdain transmuted in Marx's category of 'alienated labour', and, late comer that he was to Hegel's philosophy when he turned to Marxism, it was all the easier for him to see the 'alienation of labour' as a sociological derivative of the self-alienation of the Absolute Idea. As such, it had none of the grim finality which the vision

*The two earlier parts of Mr. Watnick's essay were published in *Soviet Survey*, Nos. 23 and 24.

[1] J. A. Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (New York, 1954), pp. 392, 414, 438.

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of 'alienated' man had conveyed in his pre-Marxist days. On the contrary, it now contained the certainty of its own eventual disappearance; like the Absolute Idea in its existential, i.e. 'alienated' form, it too would transcend itself through the evolving class consciousness of its historical subject and chief victim, the industrial proletariat, until finally an act of revolution made it possible for man to come into his own as his truly human self.

Read this way, all of Marx's thought, down to the very fine print of its economic analysis, became the work of a moral philosopher articulating the future of man's existence in the accents of a secular eschatology. Nothing could have been less welcome to the general run of Marxists, least of all to those who had opted for Leninism and the positivistic scientific norms that went with it. Those so inclined might have shrugged it off indulgently as Lukacs' personal Marxism, but they could always consult the available texts to assure themselves that it was not Marx's. And since Lukacs had little more to go on when he wrote his book (1919-1923) than the truncated version of Marx's early writings published before the war, plus his own Hegelian turn of mind, the exegetes had no difficulty in documenting their case against his 'deviationism.'

IT was not until a decade later (1932) when Marx's early philosophical studies in economics were published for the first time[2] that Lukacs had the satisfaction of learning how accurately he had read Marx's meaning. Not that publication of the manuscript could do anything to rehabilitate his work among orthodox Communists or even spare him the ordeal of a recantation two years later; what decided the case against him and kept it that way was the structure of orthodox Leninist doctrine as it stood in 1923 and as it was subsequently perpetuated in the official dogma of the Soviet state—largely, then, the metaphysic of naive realism with its 'transcript' theory of consciousness, taken over from Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* and thus devoid of the pronounced Hegelianism of his later period. For reasons not hard to surmise, moreover, the 'alienation of labour' has seldom been a subject of conspicuous interest to Soviet Marxism, *in res* or in theory. Small wonder, then, that Lukacs had to bide his time for as long as he remained in the Soviet Union before returning to the theme to settle scores with his orthodox critics.[3] Here again, however, as in so many other cases, Lukacs became a prophet without honour in his own movement; it was his original 'deviationism' of 1923 which anticipated, where it did not actually inspire, the drastic reappraisal of *Capital* and of Marx's general place in the tradition of western thought at the hands of a long line of later European scholars.[4]

[2] Oekonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte,' *Marx-Engels: Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe* (ed. V. Adoratski), Abt. I, Bd. III (Berlin, 1932), pp. 33 ff. The best proof that the later Marx was as much under Hegel's influence when he wrote *Capital* as he was in his younger days was supplied by the draft notes of his economic analysis. Cf. K. Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* (Moscow, 1939).

[3] It would be doing Lukacs an injustice to regard his *Der junge Hegel* merely as a polemic. Completed in 1938 but not published until a decade later, after Lukacs had left the Soviet Union, it quickly established itself as a work of major importance in its own right. Nevertheless, orthodox Leninists were bound to regard it as a rejoinder to their earlier attacks, for that, in part, is precisely what Lukacs intended, confident that he could now enlist the support not only of the younger Marx, but of the younger Hegel as well. Thus, denounced a generation before for having read too much of Hegel into Marx, he could now turn the tables on his orthodox critics by citing the *Realphilosophie* (also published for the first time in 1932) as evidence that Hegel's earlier philosophy might also be read, to some extent, as the work of an embryonic Marxist. Cf. *Der junge Hegel* (Berlin, 1954), pp. 369 ff. This, of course, is not to suggest that Lukacs contrived a case to suit his polemical purpose; the parallelism between the younger Hegel's trend of thought on the alienation of labour and that of the younger Marx is indeed striking enough to have impressed other scholars long before Lukacs' study appeared. Nevertheless, even in making the most of it to confound his orthodox critics in the Communist camp, Lukacs cut a tragically subservient figure. Rather than argue the case on its own merits, he tried to make it more palatable by appealing *ad nauseam* to the authority of Lenin's post-1914 Hegelianism, even to the point of falsifying the record where his own work was involved. But all to no avail, judging by the orthodox Communist reaction. Cf. O. R. Gropp, 'Die marxistische dialektische Methode und ihr Gegensatz zur idealistischen Dialektik Hegels,' *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 1954, 1, pp. 69-112.

[4] The best survey of the voluminous literature in this field is offered in two studies by E. Thier and I. Fetscher in *Marxismusstudien* (Schriften der Studiengemeinschaft der Evangelischen Akademien), Tübingen, 1954, pp. 1 ff. and pp. 173 ff.

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Furthermore, it was Lukacs' book which supplied much of the impetus for the development of a sociology of knowledge, particularly the form it took in the work of Mannheim, an associate of his in the closing years of the war. Mannheim's mind was a hybrid of many divergent influences—notably, the neo-Kantianism of Weber and Rickert, the intuitionism of Dilthey, and the phenomenology of Husserl and Scheler—but, ironically enough, considering the results, it so happened that Lukacs was the one to furnish him with two of his principal methodological tools.

The idea that a system of thought might be conceived as an ideal type and then imputed to a social group, likewise thought of as an ideal type, was an inspiration Lukacs borrowed from his teacher, Max Weber, and by grafting it on to Marx's sociology of classes, he was able to derive a doctrine of proletarian class consciousness distinctly his own. Nevertheless, Mannheim found the reasoning suggestive enough to take it over (minus its Marxian *tendenz*) and even couple it with still another lead from the same source. For it was Lukacs' highly instrumental Marxism, more than anything else, which suggested to Mannheim that *all* social and political doctrines which pass for knowledge might better be regarded as 'existentially determined' doctrines, i.e., as elaborate rationalisations of group interests—mainly the interests of classes—which must 'distort' the actualities of social life if they are to serve those interests effectively.

CLEARLY, a sociology of knowledge constructed on such lines could well turn out to be a sociology of illusions, with nothing to show for its trouble but the intellectual paralysis of total scepticism. For, if all thinking—barring that of the mathematician and scientist[5]—is bound to be tendentious thinking by virtue of its social origin, how can one conceivably distinguish between authentic knowledge and mere ideology? And even assuming that such a distinction were possible, would it not in turn entail the use of criteria no less tainted by the same source? Actually, these and other perplexities of the same order were largely of Mannheim's own making to begin with; they might have been avoided by a more careful analysis of the scope and purpose of empirical knowledge—the only kind that concerned him as a sociologist—and of the range of 'interests' which motivate the quest for such knowledge.

Failing that, the assumption that interest-charged thinking must be deceptive was bound to lead into an impasse from which Mannheim could see but one way out: a sociological form of epistemological relativism (or 'relationism,' as he preferred to call it) which despaired of ever achieving any such thing as objectively valid knowledge *sine ira et studio* (save in neutral fields like science, of course) and settled for something considerably less. All ideologies, Marxism included, Mannheim consoled himself, have their share of truth along with their errors, the proportion varying with the social 'vantage point' from which each is propounded. Accordingly, if 'absolute' truth is unattainable, it might still be approximated through a synthesis of the most promising 'perspectives.'

By his influence on Mannheim, Lukacs thus precipitated something more than he cared to bargain for—a sociological case for relativism that backfired on his own Marxism. From its exempt position as the avatar of reason in history, Marxism was suddenly reduced in Mannheim's system to the status of another ideology, having no more inherent claim to objective validity than any of its rivals.[6] And yet, Mannheim's relativism *per se* was the one thing above all which Lukacs could not blame for demoting Marxism without laying himself open to censure on the same grounds. For the fact is that his Marxism was itself nothing if not ultra-relativistic—no less radically so, at any rate, than Mannheim's sociology of knowledge. How, then, was it possible for that Marxism—considered in strictly theoretical terms and apart from all other considerations—to confirm its own validity as a creed to the master, and yet do no more than 'expose' itself as an ideology to the pupil?

[5] In exempting the physical sciences and mathematics, Mannheim was inconsistent. Given the assumptions of his analysis, there is no reason for considering these fields of thought supra-ideological.

[6] K. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York, 1949), pp. 110 ff. That Mannheim did not take Marxism at its own claims does not mean that he thought little of it. On the contrary, he was inclined, if anything, to show it more partiality than other ideologies. *Ibid.*, pp. 66 ff.

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The answer, as one might suppose, was not so much a matter of sociological relativism as of the philosophical presuppositions from which it proceeded in each case. Thus, for all his other ambiguities in this respect, there is little doubt that Mannheim rejected any notion of truth predicated on the assumption of an order of supra-empirical reality; all that concerned him, at least in his capacity as a sociologist, was the reality of 'life-situations' as they confronted men and societies. Since that and that alone is the reality which people see from different 'vantage points' in the social structure, their ideologies can be 'relatively' true only with respect to that reality. To be consistent, Mannheim would have had to assume that objectively valid knowledge about that reality is possible—else what would there be for ideologies to falsify?—and nothing, perhaps, did more to vitiate his entire line of approach than his own insistence that all truth is relative. But this aside, the imperfect 'relative' truth to which Mannheim subscribed was a truth made up solely of 'the data presented by the real factual thinking that we carry on in this world . . .'[7]—not of a hierarchy of truths, in other words, but of one-dimensional truths, all of the empirical type. By and large, then, Mannheim's sociological relativism bore the distinct marks of its neo-Kantian origin in two crucial respects: it refused to consider the problem of the truth-value of ideologies on anything but empirical terms, and, in doing so, it also insisted on regarding all ideologies as data, i.e., as something to be studied 'from without.'

Of all this there was hardly a trace in Lukacs' Hegelianised Marxism. What we find, instead is a built-in relativism, with the doctrine serving as its own referent and thus certifying its own superiority as a doctrine to all systems of bourgeois or pre-bourgeois thought. All that was needed for that purpose, from the standpoint of formal adequacy, was a philosophical justification for grading, or perhaps one should say 'weighting,' the truth-value of different ideologies, and this Lukacs supplied by introducing what amounts to a sociological version of the concept of 'two truths,' derived from the Hegelian distinction between the actual and the real or rational world. This done, his argument could proceed to its conclusion with all the compulsive logic characteristic of any closed intellectual system.

REDUCED to its essentials, the argument took two forms, one mainly philosophical, the other sociological.[8] The first of these, intended to vindicate the superiority of Marxism as a doctrine, i.e., as an account of the object of knowledge, runs the familiar Hegelian course. An ideology is of an inferior order of truth, according to Lukacs, if it is concerned only with the apparent truth of the actual or empirical world. Such an ideology takes the world as it is and tries to make it intelligible to man's understanding by reducing it to a pattern of scientific law or to a reasonable facsimile thereof. What emerges from such an approach is a world of the here and now, a pre-eminently logical world of fixed and enduring entities and arrangements and one which man's understanding can take piecemeal and on its own limited terms. Limited to its proper domain—the physical world—such an approach need not falsify reality; on the contrary, it may even promote man's understanding of and control over nature on a scale never before matched. Nothing, for example, could have been more congenial to the progress of physical science, given its positivistic temper, its specialised fields of subject matter and its need for quantification, than the intellectual setting provided by an ideology of this type.

And yet, when all this has been granted, argued Lukacs, the very conception of truth which makes such an ideology an inexhaustible source of man's knowledge of the physical world also blinds his vision to the realities of his own existence in the social world. It does this by inculcating the illusion, or what Marx called the 'false consciousness,' that existing social arrangements are governed by immutable laws, very much like those which prevail in the processes of the physical world

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 268.

[8] Being largely a collection of essays published between 1919 and 1922, Lukacs' book lacks a clearly articulated structure. The account given here is therefore an attempt to assemble the main threads of his argument as they recur in different parts of his book.

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and, like them, beyond the power of man to change. To anyone so indoctrinated—and this, *ceteris paribus*, may comprise all classes of the population—all social processes take on an illusory or 'reified' appearance in the sense that they come to be regarded as having an 'objective,' external reality of their own, as though they were something other than the activities of members of the same society in their relations with one another. This, according to Lukacs, is the clue to man's split personality as a member of modern society; what he thinks he does in that capacity (his consciousness) bears no relation to what he actually does (his existence).[9] If anything, the accomplishments of science tend to nourish the very social irrationality already fostered by the reified structure of its parent ideology. By isolating the facts of the empirical world for specialised study, for example, the social sciences have to disregard the organic unity which alone gives them meaning and, by treating them as hard and fast data, they convert what are essentially potentialities into finalities.

BUT to Lukacs, as to any Hegelian, the actual world of data is but an imperfect realisation of the real or rational world—a world in which man's essential rationality will have superseded the reified existence he leads today. The truth of that rational world and of the process by which history evolves towards its realisation is given not by the empirical understanding, but by speculative reason. An ideology based merely on the faculty of understanding cannot, therefore, discover the structure of totality which pervades the categories of the actual social world, much less appreciate the inner dialectic which drives it forward to its dénouement in the rational world. These are the province of reason alone, and if reason indicates that 'becoming appears as the truth of being, process as the truth of things, then this means that the developmental tendencies of history partake of a higher reality than the "facts" of mere experience.'[10] Clearly, then, what Lukacs' argument came to on the philosophical level was nothing less than the claim that Marxism is objectively more valid than any rival ideology on the ground that it alone incorporates the 'higher' truth of the dialectic of history.[11] But if all this is taken at face value, what remains of Marxism as a self-professed relativist doctrine? In claiming a superior *objective* truth for it, did not Lukacs, in effect, put it beyond the pale of proletarian class interests and of the subjectively infected outlook that goes with them? How, then, could he still insist that Marxism is uniquely a proletarian doctrine?

Conundrum that this was, Lukacs nevertheless managed to eat his relativist cake and still have it. Obviously, this could not be done by describing Marxism as the natural response of workers to their lot under capitalism; quite apart from the inherent absurdity of such a view, any relativism based on an argument from psychology would only belie the doctrine's claim to objective validity. In fact, to avoid running any such risk, all empirical referents of this type, standing outside the terms of the doctrine itself, had to be excluded, leaving the doctrine enclosed within its own logic, as it were. The problem, then, was to find in Marxism itself, not in the ' "facts" of mere experi-

[9] Though Lukacs regarded reification as the fatal weakness of 'bourgeois' thought, it is no less conspicuous in its Marxist guise in Lenin's pre-1914 view of the relationship between 'social being' and 'social consciousness,' a view clearly traceable via Plekhanov, Kautsky, and Engels to nineteenth century materialism. In fact, this was one of the many reasons why orthodox Leninists were so outraged by the implications of Lukacs' Hegelianism.

[10] *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*, p. 198.

[11] Whether this amounts to a case for the *absolute* validity of Marxism, as some critics have suggested, is open to doubt. The very concept of a dialectic in history has to 'relativise' the absolute, so to speak, to account for history as a process. The truth of Marxism would therefore have to be considered as part of the continuing interaction between the Notion and its particular and singular manifestations. Even in its pristine Hegelian version, then, dialectical thought would have to rule out such a claim for any doctrine. This applies *a fortiori* to the dialectic as conceived by Lukacs or, for that matter, by the early Marx. Both regarded it as the correct formulation of, as well as the actual course of, man's development throughout the 'pre-history' of his existence in class-structured societies. Hence their conclusion that much of the substance of their doctrine, particularly historical materialism, would be invalidated once reason fulfilled itself in the establishment of a classless society. Nevertheless, even if Lukacs stopped short of 'absolutising' Marxism, his claim for its superior truth-value lacked nothing by way of doctrinaire presumption.

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ence,' a sociological framework for the two types of truth which would invest them with a social function without destroying their independent heuristic status. And given Marx's analysis of social trends in a capitalist society, the solution Lukacs needed could be derived easily enough, merely by a process of bi-lateral imputation. The social structure of modern capitalism tends increasingly to polarise around two antagonistic vantage points or class positions. In the ensuing struggle, each of these requires its own intellectual outlook and system of values as a matter of sheer strategic or objective necessity, whether its occupants realise it or not. With this as a starting point, the rest followed as a matter of course; Lukacs had only to pair off each of the two truths and its respective ideological elaboration with what he considered to be its correlative class position, and the outcome could be extrapolated, in so far as it depended on intellectual advantage, on the comparative truth-value of these ideologies.

ACCORDINGLY, what qualifies an empirically-oriented system of thought as the ideology of the bourgeoisie is not its appeal to this or that bourgeois, but its instrumental value to the class as a whole. The exceptional property owner may indeed take a dim view of the future but, if the bourgeoisie as a class is to maintain itself in power, most of its members must be persuaded no less than the workers they employ that the existing order is a permanent one. Nothing can serve that purpose better, in Lukacs' view, than a 'reified' structure of thought based on the limited truth of understanding; negatively, it serves to divert attention from the fatal weaknesses of the capitalist system as a whole, and positively it acts as a psychological prop for that system, by identifying what is merely a passing phase of man's historic existence with the eternal order of nature. This, needless to add, is nothing but self-deception on both counts but, undaunted by the paradox of his argument, Lukacs concluded that self-deception is precisely what is required of all or most members of the bourgeoisie if their class is to remain in power. 'The obstacle . . . which makes the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie a "false" consciousness,' he wrote, 'is objective; it is the situation of the class itself. It is an objective consequence of the economic structure of society, not something arbitrary, subjective or psychological.'[12]

Again reasoning by imputation, Lukacs could reach the opposite conclusion about the proletariat. Its position as a class requires that it break with existing social arrangements, even if workers themselves may not see it that way. As Marx had put it long before Lukacs: 'It is not a matter of what this or that proletarian, or even the entire proletariat, envisages as the goal at any particular time. It is a question of what the proletariat is and of what it will have to do historically, judged by the condition of its existence.'[13] Because that 'condition of existence' requires a revolutionary break with the existing economic system, it offers the only vantage point in the social structure from which the system as a whole and its 'laws of motion' can be observed in their proper perspective. But to do this, to see the system for what it is and without 'ideological distortions' of any kind, requires a type of class consciousness which is identical with the truth of the 'higher reality' incorporated in Marxism itself —a truth that can transcend the illusions of 'reification' and envisage the rational society without classes beyond as the only alternative to man's self-alienation under capitalism. And by the same token, it is that truth which makes the proletariat as a class the instrument of reason in history. Carried to its logical conclusion, then, Lukacs' feat of self-validating scholasticism came to this, that Marxism=historic reason=proletarian class consciousness.

Not that Lukacs regarded the triumph of reason as a foregone conclusion in any deterministic sense; the outcome would depend on whether actual workers can come to appreciate the opportunity history offered them as a class.

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[12] *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*, p. 65. In other words, when Lukacs speaks of the 'false consciousness' of the bourgeoisie as being 'objective,' he means merely that it is a necessary condition for perpetuating the power of the bourgeoisie as a class, not that it makes realistic thought 'objectively impossible' for the individual bourgeois. This latter misreading is not uncommon, a recent example being the otherwise valuable study of W. Stark, *The Sociology of Knowledge* (Glencoe, 1958), pp. 308 ff.

[13] 'Die heilige Familie,' *Gesamtausgabe*, Abt. I, Bd. III, p. 207.

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But even if they were to fail in this, Marxism would still remain, on Lukacs' terms, a uniquely proletarian doctrine. In this sense, it was decidedly a relativised Marxism, so much so that it could even specify the conditions which would invalidate its own categories of analysis. Having identified it with proletarian class consciousness, Lukacs had to rule it out as a doctrine for eternity; historical materialism, its instrument of analysis, for example, requires drastic modification before it can be applied to the study of pre-capitalist societies, and it might even outlive its purpose entirely, once the goal of a rational society were achieved.

To suppose, then, that Lukacs' relativism was of a kind with Mannheim's, as Stalinist spokesmen made a habit of doing while damning them both, is to identify two distinctly different approaches to the problem of the social determination of thought, however much one may have borrowed from the other. Where Mannheim scrutinised all systems of thought for their 'ideological' sins against the same type of truth, Lukacs singled out Marxism as the sole exception, endowed with the virtue of a 'higher' order of truth. But even with the issue so clearly drawn, Lukacs could not meet the challenge on his own ground. To have done so after the interdiction of his own book might have made him the target of renewed attacks in Communist circles. All he could do, on occasion, to make up for his silence was to fall back on the standard Leninist retort to relativism of any kind, viz., that while man's knowledge advances by a sequence of relative approximations, truth itself is 'objective' and 'absolute.' Whether or not Mannheim's relativism or anyone else's could be exorcised by this recourse to Lenin's *ipse dixit*, there was small comfort in it for anyone still left wondering what it had to do with the superior truth-value Lukacs had claimed for Marxism.

DURING the post-war period, the emergence of existentialism as a major school of thought in Western Europe saw Lukacs cast in still another of his many involuntary rôles, and again it was acted out with the tragi-comic effect of one reciting lines foreign to his own idiom. Certainly the result could not be charged to Lukacs' apathy or want of effort; quite the contrary, no one of his persuasion had more direct intellectual reason to be concerned about the existentialist challenge. Add to this the fact that Lukacs' prestige made him the one Communist spokesman certain to be given an attentive hearing in the west—nowhere more so, perhaps, than among the existentialists themselves—and the jaded response to his anti-existentialist tract[14] becomes proof all the more of how pathetically miscast he was for the part.

As one might have gathered from his own remarks many years later, when he could finally bring himself to repudiate Stalinist orthodoxy, the fault lay not with the audience nor with the actor—except in the sense that he lent himself to such a part—but with the script itself. The existentialist case, as that of any other rival doctrine, had to be confronted on its own ground, he acknowledged, not in the arena of Leninist-Stalinist dogmatics.[15] But meeting the existentialists on their own ground was precisely what Lukacs dared not risk for the very good reason that they shared large tracts of it with the Marxism of *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*.

What came from his pen as if by force of habit, then, could hardly be taken as anything more than a psychological commentary on its author—another *pis aller*, in short, compounded of the abusive *Vulgarmarxismus* and ultra-Leninist scientism which recur periodically in Lukacs' work whenever his 'deviationist' self might assert itself. Nor does one have to be addicted either to Lukacs' pre-Leninist Hegelianism or to the nebulosities of Sartre or Heidegger to see his attack on existentialism in anything but that light; it was too clearly a case of Lukacs at war with himself to pass for much else. To take but one of many telling examples, what was one to make of Lukacs' strictures against Heidegger's concept of 'existence' with its insistence that the world is meaningful only in so far as it is a function of man's subjectivity? All this, ventured Lukacs in

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[14] *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, Berlin, 1951.

[15] An abbreviated English translation of his remarks may be found in *Soviet Survey*, November, 1956, pp.15-19. For the full text, see *Aufbau* (Berlin), September, 1956, pp. 761 ff.

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approved Leninist fashion, is nothing but 'the chief epistemological thesis of subjective idealism that there is no object without a subject . . . and of an irrational, mystical variety of subjective idealism, at that. . . .'[16] Quite apart from the distortion of Lukacs' rendering of the concept, the fact remains that, whatever else he made of it, Heidegger's 'Dasein' is essentially what one finds underlying much of the argument of *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*. It was also what Marx had in mind when he criticised Feuerbach's materialism for conceiving of 'the object, reality . . . only in the form of the object . . ., not as human sense activity . . ., not subjectively.' For all his professions of Leninist orthodoxy dating back to 1934, the more insistently Lukacs laboured the unqualified pan-objectivism of Leninist ontology in his polemic against existentialism, the less plausible it rang as an expression of his own Marxism.

All this is not to suggest that existentialists know Lukacs only in the rôle of an adversary, more concerned with his own *Parteilichkeit* than with the drift of their argument. For, by another of those strange ironies in which his career abounds, it so happens that his *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* was the one book by a modern Marxist in which existentialists, particularly those in France, could find the likeness of their own philosophical temper reflected.[17] One of his more enthusiastic partisans has gone so far as to claim that Lukacs' *Die Seele und die Formen* and his *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* make him the true founder of modern existentialism. Indeed, many existentialists, going on the strength of the affinities between their own doctrine and Lukacs' work, have even ventured to reinterpret the Marxism of Lukacs, and of the early Marx from which it is derived, as being itself a form of social existentialism.

The merits of such a claim would require an analysis going well beyond the scope of the present discussion. As with all attempts to recast one doctrine in terms of another, so in this case, much depends on the relative importance assigned to their different elements. But without an act of intellectual excision, one suspects that a Hegelianised Marxism such as Lukacs' would still remain a Marxism which defies the pure subjectivity of existentialist transcendence and counts, instead, on a dialectic of history, operating through the action of a social class, to lift humanity to a life of 'authentic existence.' It might well turn out, then, that any attempt to cast that Marxism in an existentialist mould would only result in something more Marxist than existentialist.

Be that as it may, there is no overlooking the startling affinity between the style of Lukacs' thinking, both before and after his conversion to Marxism, and the approach which recurs through all the variations of the existentialist theme: both emphatically reject the 'unauthentic' or 'ordinary' life of 'alienated' man; both discount truth of the positivist type as man's guide to 'authentic' or 'rational' existence; and in both, it is the experience of choice, commitment and action, particularly during moments of crisis, that transforms man into an authentic subject of his own existence.

If so, it is also on the 'existential' plane of choice and commitment that the dialectic of history would have to be enacted, not through the 'laws of motion' of the economic system.

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[16] *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 170-171.

[17] This is true most notably of M. Merleau-Ponty. See his 'Marxisme et Philosophie' and 'Autour de Marx' in *Sens et Non-Sens* (Paris, 1948), and his more recent book, *Les Aventures de la Dialectique* (Paris, 1955), esp. Ch. II. For an exhaustive survey of the more recent literature bearing on Lukacs' influence on existentialist thought, see H. Dahm, 'Ist die sowjetrussische Dialektik latenter Existentialismus?' *Ost-Probleme*, 26 October 1956, pp. 1486 ff.

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Two Literary Profiles

I. LEONID LEONOV

Ronald Hingley

LEONOV can now look back on nearly forty years of authorship which have placed him amongst the half dozen most distinguished Soviet writers. A man of pleasing rather than of striking appearance, he carries his fifty-nine years lightly, is slightly over medium height, and might easily pass as an ordinary member of the Soviet public. But there have in fact been few figures in Soviet letters less ordinary than he.

Soviet published material on Leonov would not lead one to suspect this. It is without any violent spasm of interest that one learns of his many civic virtues, his habit of helping poor students, his Order of Lenin, his election to the Supreme Soviet and to the Presidium of the Writers' Union. Recently a more homely note was struck in an article in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of 4 March 1958. This begins by painting an attractive picture of our author in his shirt sleeves planting bushes in the garden of his *dacha*. We also learn another detail which further emphasises that love of the Russian countryside—in particular of its forests—so fully illustrated in his novels. He is at the present moment gathering sympathisers in the hope of founding a voluntary society for the preservation of rural Russia.

Among other personal details which seem to detach themselves from the general hagiographical haze are: his origins in the Zaryad'ye, a quarter of Moscow then occupied by small traders; the arrest and exile in Tsarist times of his father, a minor poet; his own early interest in writing verse; his passion for the painter Breughel, whose works, he believed, contained indications of how the novelist should approach his craft. It appears that he spends some of his leisure time carving wooden gnomes of intricate design. It is also to be noted that, despite his exalted position, he has never taken the step of joining the Communist Party, perhaps because (though indications are not necessarily conclusive here) he considers himself a religious believer.

In general we receive the impression of a man whose adjustments to the demands made by Soviet society upon the writer have followed a curve different from the adaptation graph of any other well-known author of his generation. But if we wish to discover anything of real value about this elusive and subtle brain, it is upon his fiction that we must mainly rely.

IT can have come as no surprise to connoisseurs of our author when he made the hero of his most recent novel, *The Russian Forest*, a lame professor. Professors have figured in Leonov's work since one of his earliest short stories, in which he had caused a palaeontologist to snatch from a passer-by in the streets of starving Petrograd a horse's head—a coveted tit-bit in the worst days of War Communism. As for the lameness of the hero of *The Russian Forest*, there are also many precedents for this. A preoccupation with disablement has been a staple feature since Leonov's early days, mutilation and disease being distributed among his characters with scrupulous political impartiality. In the novel *Sot* the unspeakable Vaska, anti-Soviet leader of a band of hooligans known for their habit of tying strangers in sacks and dipping them in the river on the end of a rope, had lost both legs during the First World War. In the same novel the young monk Gelasy, after running away to become a good Soviet citizen, was ambushed and rendered unfit for marriage by a kick from a less politically enlightened former monastery stable-mate, Brother Filofey. Pashka, the main Bolshevik in *The Badgers*, had been maimed in childhood by a blow from a scythe delivered by an idiot female reaper; this same village idiot, in keeping with the atmosphere of casual violence so typical not only of Leonov alone but of Russian literature in general, was later to be ridden down and killed by an incensed anti-Soviet

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rebel who thought she had released a captured Commissar, previously tied to a stake in marshy country in the expectation that he would be eaten alive by gnats. Such are the ramifications, such the outrageous details in which Leonov deals.

Compared with these wild characters and episodes, the activities of Vikhrov, the hardworking Professor of Forestry in *The Russian Forest*, may seem drab. Yet Leonov packed into Vikhrov's doctrines what was at the time politically explosive material. This has not been widely noticed either in Russia or abroad. In Russia the main controversy concerning the novel has centred round M. Shcheglov's review in *Novy Mir* (1954, 5). Here, although the reviewer's general assessment of the novel was favourable, Leonov was attacked, in effect for being insufficiently 'thaw-minded' in that he portrayed Professor Gratsiansky, the villain of his novel and Vikhrov's main enemy, as a person with a compromised pre-revolutionary past; whereas according to Shcheglov such despicable characters often arise purely out of Soviet conditions and should here have been shown to have done so.

While condemning Leonov in effect for being too Stalinist in his approach, Shcheglov ignored, or thought it politic to ignore, the strong anti-Stalinist implications also present in the novel. It would seem that these have also escaped the notice even of such an acute non-Soviet observer as Professor Gleb Struve, if one is to judge from the passage on *The Russian Forest* in the new (German, 1957) edition of his *Soviet Russian Literature*. These implications reside mainly in Leonov's use of the forest as a symbol for the Russian people. When Vikhrov is made to attack pre-revolutionary capitalist exploiters of the forest, such as the timber-dealer Knyshev, for cutting down trees without replacing them, we see an attack on the exploitation of the Russian people in Tsarist days and are not surprised. But when Vikhrov makes it clear that the despoliation and neglect of the forest had not ceased with the Revolution, but were still going on, we should sit up and take notice. In this aspect the novel contains a submerged but by no means half-hearted attack on the disregard of the individual practised under Stalin. Despite such specimens of 'reinsurance' in the novel as the gratuitous impudence with which Leonov equates his torturing Nazis with the whole of the 'old' (i.e. Western) world, and the treatment of Gratsiansky complained of by Shcheglov, *The Russian Forest* is essentially a specimen of 'thaw' literature. It was mainly written during Stalin's lifetime and published shortly after his death. Artistically it is the best piece of 'thaw' writing. (It would be perverse to include in this category Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*, which is on a still higher artistic level.)

If the explosive implications of *The Russian Forest* have failed to attract attention, this has been mainly due to the complexity and obscurity which have always been characteristic of Leonov. To say that he has an oblique approach would be an understatement. He operates behind a smoke-screen of detail. Nowhere in Soviet or perhaps in any other literature are there scenes so littered with gewgaws, bric-a-brac and miscellaneous paraphernalia. Stuffed animals, rare cacti or shrubs with unpronounceable names, dusty books (perhaps used to replace the broken leg of a dilapidated arm-chair), leaky roofs, lilac twigs probing through cracks in the walls, dark and sinister corridors where the hand, feeling for a concealed doorknob, finds sticky dirt oozing under the fingernails—these are typical items in a Leonov *mise-en-scène*. Amid surroundings of this kind lurk such specimens of human bric-a-brac and relics of the old regime as Osip Benislavich Shtruf, the fraudulent antique dealer in the novel *Skutarevsky*, who supplies the wife of yet another Professor hero with fake paintings and Greek vases (forged often enough by the Professor's own brother). Describing how he had run a Greek amphora to earth in one of his appalling cellars, Shtruf tells how a rat scuttled out of it, an old rat 'with a peeling back . . .' 'Do you know,' Shtruf continues in a digression characteristic of Leonov's habit of verbal doodling, 'that some species of rat live as long as two-hundred-and-seventy years? . . . I remember its reddish, questioning eyes. My match went out.'

TOGETHER with all this goes erudition of a kind not typical of Soviet literature. Latin tags have almost ceased to be quoted in the British House of Commons, but they still crop

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up occasionally in Leonov. So do references to such figures as the elder Cato, Mucius Scaevola, Hesiod, as also to the civilisation of ancient Egypt, the Italian Renaissance and—most surprisingly of all—the Bible. These references are one of the most astonishing features in Leonov. Many of them are too recondite to mean very much to a reader with a Western classical education, and they must mean even less to many Soviet readers.

Inevitable in Soviet conditions is the absence amongst all this erudition of any reference to the works of Freud, who was surely made for Leonov just as much as was Leonov's acknowledged master Dostoevsky. One might speculate how much Freud, especially in view of his own penetrating essay on Dostoevsky, might have made of Leonov's preoccupation with spiral staircases, dark corridors, caves and secret corners of the impenetrable forest, such as those which sheltered the troglodytic anti-Soviet rebel 'Badgers,' together with every other possible form (to parody momentarily Leonov's style in English) of anfractuosity, interstice and orifice, so that the whole of his work might be regarded as a tone poem constructed around the theme of re-entry into the womb.

That such exoticisms should have flourished in Russia shortly after the Revolution, at the time when Leonov made his debut, will surprise no one who is familiar with the conditions under which Russian literature was produced during the 1920s. In his first two novels, *The Badgers* (1924) and *The Thief* (1927), and also in the various oddments which preceded them, Leonov showed himself, as did many other contemporary fellow-travelling writers, free from the burden of any social command. However, Soviet literary processers have not accorded to these first two novels the same treatment. *The Thief* is a study of NEP in which the hero, Mitka Vekshin, is a criminal obsessed with a Dostoevskian sense of guilt because of an atrocity committed by him during the Civil War, and in which, at the end, he undergoes a conversion to the role of decent citizen even less convincing than that of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*. This novel is regarded as anti-Soviet and has been omitted from the comprehensive edition of Leonov's works published in 1953, there being small likelihood of its republication in the immediate future. Several non-Soviet commentators have acclaimed it as Leonov's best work, but despite the novel's many virtues this assessment may be due to a prejudice common outside the Soviet orbit—that is, a tendency to regard the literary excellence of a Soviet work as necessarily bearing a roughly proportionate relation to the degree of political heresy (from a Soviet point of view) which it contains.

The Badgers, which has been given a cleaner political record than *The Thief*, tells of an anti-Soviet uprising—a theme probably inspired by the Tambov incident of 1920-1921. Here Leonov is claimed by N. Nusinov, author of an article in the *Soviet Literary Encyclopaedia*, to have shown how the 'best elements' in the village gravitate towards Communism. Since in Soviet parlance the 'best elements' are by definition those which gravitate towards Communism, this claim is tautologous; but in any case the novel is hardly written in a spirit of political conformism. To the peasants Bolshevism is shown to appear as somewhat alien. The point is repeatedly made, as they scratch the back of their necks (in the manner hallowed in the literary tradition of describing the Russian *muzhik*), that they are much more interested in such parochial matters as who owns the disputed Zinka's Meadow than in abstract issues of policy. The youthful Communist Vasyatka Lyzlov is comically treated, as are many youthful Communists in Leonov's later work. It is the anarchic element in the Russian countryside which Leonov stresses, and nothing sums up the spirit of the novel so well as the delicious sentence relating how the rebellious 'Badgers' had cut down telephone wires leading to District Headquarters and made out of them 'unheard of quantities of balalayka strings.' Not the least of the charms of *The Badgers* is a broad comedy based on bucolic humour, and showing affinities with similar knockabout Russian peasant comedy in authors as different from Leonov as the poet Nekrasov and the novelist Sholokhov.

SO much for Leonov's contribution to fiction in the laxer days of the 1920s. At the end of the decade, when literature became closely directed to industrial and political aims, a

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change was bound to occur. Now many flourishing plants were either uprooted or hacked about. Successive strains of weed-killer in the shape of the hegemony of RAPP (the Association of Proletarian Writers) and the drive for Socialist Realism were applied to Soviet literature and were destined, it might seem to the unsympathetic observer, to reduce a once picturesque garden to a dull patch sown with identical blades of grass all pointing in the same direction. But these prunings and processings hardly discouraged the exotic burgeonings of Leonov's talent. He accepted the social command, yet retained his personal touch. In *Sot,* his first major *engagé* work, he wrote one of the best specimens of a 'Five Year Plan novel.' The narrative concerns the building of a paper mill on the banks of a northern Russian river, the *Sot,* in sparsely-inhabited forest land. Craggy and dedicated in accordance with the stereotype for fictional Communists, Leonov's central figure, the Party member Uvadyev, yet develops as an acceptable, credible, and likeable individual. Meanwhile Leonov was able to pour his talent for the squalid, the cringing, and the tortuous into such representatives of the old and anti-Soviet forces on the banks of the Sot as the local monks and kulaks.

In the monastery scenes in *Sot* Leonov once again shows his ability to borrow creatively from Dostoevsky. Into this preposterous backwater erupts a party of tough engineers, who, stranded in the forest, ask the monks for a night's lodging. The episode is described with no less verve than had been lavished by Dostoevsky on the intrusion of Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov into the orbit of Father Zosima. The tradition of Dostoevskian irreverence and grotesque comedy is fully maintained, for example in the incident where the Abbot offers Uvadyev a bribe (of twenty-two roubles!) to go and build his paper mill somewhere else. No less amusing is the nocturnal scene which concerns the handsome chemist Suzanna Renne (main heroine of the novel and the first woman to have crossed the threshold of the monastery) when a young monk crept into her cell at night and after 'sniffing her over' while she slept, woke her up and asked her to show him 'how it's done.' But most preposterous of all is the holy man Eusebius, who, 'crushed by an old and stinking disease,' had lain for years in a dark corner, wrapped in filthy rags. When it became clear he was about to die, the saint was given an airing and the faithful gathered to hear his last words, hoping that they would contain some great mystical revelation. 'Eusebius raised himself up . . . opened his dreamy eyelids' and shouted in a dry, cracked voice: 'There is no God.' Nowhere is Leonov's sense of the ridiculous more aptly illustrated.

In his next novel, *Skutarevsky,* Leonov made increased use of a device which was also to dominate the two following novels and one which also stems from Dostoevsky. I shall refer to this as the 'barbed duologue.' It may be remembered that Dostoevsky's works abound in conversations between two persons in which, though nothing is made explicit, one of the speakers torments the other with concealed threats and hints. Such are the well-known clashes between the official investigator Porfiry and the murderer Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment,* or the less well-known duels between the gay seducer Velchaninov and the deceived husband Trusotsky in *The Eternal Husband.* It requires ingenuity to follow the barbed duologues in which *Skutarevsky* and its successors abound, for there are few Soviet writers who make so little concession to readability as Leonov—few indeed whom one requires so patiently to teach oneself to read. *Skutarevsky* was again inspired—as is true of all Leonov's novels—by a topical theme, on this occasion the activities of 'wreckers' and saboteurs reminiscent of such preoccupations of the early 1930s as the charges made against the 'Industrial Party' and the Vickers engineers. The hidden burden of Leonov's barbed duologues was often the supposed disloyalty of one or both interlocutors to the Soviet system. Various features of these duologues—the atmosphere of cat playing with mouse, the tortuous hints, the blackmail, the sarcasms parading as polite inanities, the threat of denunciation to the Security Services—are in keeping with Leonov's addiction to the oblique approach. He leaves his master Dostoevsky behind, both in the incidence of such barbed duologues and in the fabulous ingenuity, slipperiness and elusiveness with which they develop. Moreover,

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when developing them Leonov often seems to be simultaneously directing some kind of 'barbed monologue' at his readers.

Another feature of *Skutarevsky* which had already occurred in Leonov's work, and which was also to become increasingly common, was his preoccupation with family relations. The members of Leonov's families are automatically (and one cannot help once again referring to the parallel with Dostoevsky) divided one against the other. In *The Badgers* it was the Commissar Pashka who eventually crushed the peasant revolt headed by his brother Senka; such incidents of brother fighting brother were typical of the Civil War period. Seldom can there have been an author less addicted to the portrayal of stable marriage. Uvadyev's marriage to Natalya (in *Sot*) was already nearly disrupted when the latter, in a characteristically exotic incident, decided to win her man back by dyeing her hair red in imitation of the young chemist Suzanna whom he was known to admire. But her hair eventually dried bright green, after which Uvadyev exasperatedly conceded his wife to his friend Zheglov. Even more unfortunate is Professor Skutarevsky, whose entire family is tainted with varieties of counter-revolutionary blight. His wife, from whom he becomes estranged, has filled her flat with assorted *objets d'art*, being polluted with that acquisitive urge which has always been branded as a form of Soviet sin—the hero of the play *An Ordinary Man* was one of many other similar transgressors in Leonov's work. Skutarevsky's brother-in-law, a fat and repulsive diabetic, turns out to be the head of a gang of wreckers in the electrical industry who has enmeshed the Professor's son in his mysterious plots. The Professor gradually emancipates himself from these undesirables and hence from the bourgeois bond of the family. So emancipated does he become towards the end of the novel that in one of the most grisly scenes in the whole of Leonov's work, he reads a long political lecture to his son as the latter lies in hospital dying and unable to speak after deliberately shooting himself in the stomach. There are occasions when Leonov, discharging the rôle expected of a politically co-operative Soviet writer, seems rather to overfulfil his norm.

IT is possible that such examples of 'overdoing the *borshch*,' as the Russian idiom has it, reflect a resentment on Leonov's part against the politically edifying tone incumbent upon Soviet writers. If so a detail from his most recent novel will furnish a helpful illustration. Readers of *The Russian Forest* may recall that during Tsarist times the villainous Professor Gratsiansky had indulged in a form of revolutionary activity known as 'mimetism.' This involved joining the Tsarist police, gendarmerie, or political espionage and then provoking these bodies from within to acts of repression even more outrageous than those to which they were naturally given, on the calculation that the resultant indignation among the population would bring revolution nearer. Now since a brain as subtle as Leonov's must obviously have been offended by the more childish manifestations of Socialist Realism, it may be that he has himself occasionally indulged in a form of literary 'mimetism.' On this interpretation it would be possible to regard such scenes as the political lecture delivered by Professor Skutarevsky to his dying son as being directed to the ridicule of politically edifying literature. Surely no one with Leonov's proved sense of the absurd could possibly have written it 'straight.'

If, as seems likely, Leonov more than once indulged in shafts of parody directed against the very system to which he has lent such loyal support, we find here yet another parallel with Dostoevsky. Dostoevsky too embraced and propagated a comprehensive body of doctrine, although this (the Orthodox Faith, political 'reaction,' etc.) was very different from the system which commands Leonov's support. Yet Dostoevsky's works are full of gusts of irreverence towards his own idols. Gigantic scandals erupt in his holy places and atheists defeat his saints in argument. Some of the more puzzling passages in Leonov may well reflect a similar spirit.

The tortuosity characteristic of *Skutarevsky* increased in its immediate successor, *The Road to the Ocean*. This is a longer work in which Leonov, ever a keen experimenter, included nightmare visions of the future, studded with copious footnotes, and also made greater use of another device to which he was becoming

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increasingly addicted—the use of flashbacks into pre-revolutionary history. This novel does not hold together very well, but it contains some of his most brilliant passages, not least the scene of the train crash near the beginning. The hero, political organiser of an important railway line, is his fullest portrait of a Party member. Fascinating also is some of the material about the history of the railway line in capitalist times, which probably reflects a great deal of research by the author. It is interesting that each successive novel contains a greater amount of factual detail than its predecessor—his latest work, *The Russian Forest*, embodies a really extraordinary mass of technical information.

I know qualified judges who look upon *The Russian Forest* as a relatively weak work, and who claim that it lacks the exuberance and attack of earlier novels, but tend myself to regard it as Leonov's masterpiece—though it is certainly longer than it need have been. It is full of deliciously spiced double-talk as, over more than seven hundred pages, the mask is gradually pulled from the face of the careerist Professor Gratsiansky. Much play is made here, as in other works of Leonov, with the pure-hearted younger generation, reared entirely in Soviet conditions and contrasting vividly with its over-complicated elders. Professor Vikhrov's daughter Polya is the most prominent representative of this generation in *The Russian Forest*. At the beginning of the novel Vikhrov has not seen Polya, now aged eighteen, for many years. Meanwhile, fanatical in her search for ideological purity, she has decided that she 'hates her father.' The reason for her hatred is that she knows he has been attacked in the technical press because of his advocacy of restraint in the exploitation of Soviet trees and hence of a curb on maximum current productivity. Shcheglov in his review attacks this feature of Polya's character as unrealistic, because, as he claims, no typical Komsomolka would ever be quite so stupid. Perhaps not. But perhaps these aspects of Polya's character are another piece of literary 'mimetism' on Leonov's part.

IN this brief survey I have confined myself to the main part of Leonov's *oeuvre*, that is to the six long novels. But the profile of this prolific writer will not be complete without reference to some of his other productions. In the shorter narrative work *Locusts* he contributed another exotic section to the tapestry of Five Year Plan literature, extending his geographical range on this occasion to Central Asia. *The Taking of Velikoshumsk*, a short war novel, pushed his subject-range into a new department. He is also a successful playwright with a grasp of stage technique revealed both in a light Soviet-type drawing room comedy such as *An Ordinary Man* and that tense drama of the German occupation, *Invasion*.

For some tastes Leonov must seem far too baroque. His obscurities can prove forbidding; his verbal and thematic ornamentation can pall. But it is scarcely possible to conceive an author more widely removed from the triter practitioners of Soviet Realism, nor one who so scrupulously avoids all types of cliché and stereotype. If, as I would maintain, an important function of literature is to surprise, for this reason alone Leonov would deserve admiration. Writing in an era when many authors have given mechanical expression to certain revealed truths and have tended to deal more and more in officially prescribed reactions, Leonov has also paid respect to these truths and reactions, but has never lost his grip on the unpredictable. However much individual judges may quarrel in their assessment of his work, it must be agreed that he has hardly ever written a sentence which could have been written by anyone else.

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II. EVGENY EVTUSHENKO

Michael Futtrell

THE *Anthology of Soviet Russian Poetry* published in Moscow in 1957 in two massive volumes contains samples of over two hundred poets; the youngest honoured by inclusion in this comprehensive work is Evgeny Aleksandrovich Evtushenko, still in his mid-twenties. The editors of this compilation (among them Pertsov, Surkov, and Tikhonov) have thus acknowledged the importance of Evtushenko, who is certainly one of the youngest of the young poets who have recently begun to make their mark in Soviet literature. And he has attracted attention elsewhere. As the epigraph to *The Rise of Khrushchev*, a study of the struggle for Stalin's succession, Myron Rush has chosen Evtushenko's well-known line: '. . . but behind the speeches, Some obscure game is being played,' and he pointedly describes Evtushenko as a 'poet purged from the Komsomol in 1957.'

Born in 1933, Evtushenko began to publish already in 1949. Four books of his verse have appeared. During the last three years he has been a frequent contributor to the leading literary journals *Oktyabr* and *Novy Mir*.

'I won't forgive anybody coldness of heart' —this cry (in a poem in *Novy Mir*, 1956, 11) is the essence of Evtushenko's poetry, and, together with his preoccupation with and dramatisation of himself, it evokes a recollection of the young Mayakovsky, who bellowed: 'Not a single grey hair streaks my soul, not a trace of grandfatherly fondness! I shake the world with the might of my voice, and stalk—handsome, twenty-two years old.' Mayakovsky, of course, was not only a young man of colossal conceit, he was also a poet of extraordinary imagination and technical accomplishment; but he had the advantage of knowing exactly what he was rebelling against (these famous lines in 'A Cloud in Trousers' date from 1915). Evtushenko's 'cheeky, youthful bragging' (the English phrase used by a Soviet critic in 'Notes on Some Young Poets,' *Soviet Literature*, 1957, 7), is concentrated, like Mayakovsky's, largely on his own ego; but when this is, uncomfortably, not at one with his environment, the social identification of his frustrations in his poetry involves the risk of accusations of 'fault-finding' and 'black-painting' (phrases in the same English article in *Soviet Literature*), however vague and generalised the identification may be; there is no possibility of catharsis through the blistering satire of a Mayakovsky. And if even the most generalised specification of disharmony between the poet and society be avoided, there are only two other alternatives: repetition of the standard affirmations and aspirations that befit a Soviet poet, or else renewed contemplation of oneself and one's neighbours in themes of personal experience and emotion without emphasis on social context. The youthful frankness and naivety of Evtushenko's absorption in himself make his oscillations between these alternatives (groping discontent, well-intentioned goodiness, and concentration on the limited individual world), or rather his blending of them in various proportions, a fascinating phenomenon in recent Soviet writing.

Typical of the unashamedly personal orientation of much of Evtushenko's verse is a short poem in *Oktyabr* (1957, 5). The poet is lying on the damp earth, clutching his spade and chewing grass, not at all enthusiastic about what he should evidently be doing:

It'll smash the spade,
Digging the cursed ground like this;
I very much want to go to sleep,
But one's not supposed to sleep.

A girl mocks him, the other boys laugh. But the poet consoles himself; only he, and the stars, and the bushes, know what the girl was like with him at night in the forest, how she was awkward, and weak, and loving. . . . In another short poem on the next page of the same issue of *Oktyabr*, the poet wonders, after meeting a pathetic old windbag in a pub, if

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he too will finish as an empty failure; but concludes that he is all right for the time being, he is young and strong, 'and the barmaid Zina smiles at me.'

This is no doubt minor poetry in itself; but its complete lack of preaching and moralising, its evident assumption that the passing thoughts and feelings of Evgeny Evtushenko, the swarthy arms of the girl in the first poem and the smile of barmaid Zina in the second—the assumption that all this, expressed in competent if not brilliant verse, is a legitimate subject for the poet and a worthwhile one for the reader—this gives such poetry a major significance in the context of recent Soviet literature.

Sometimes Evtushenko is so full of himself and his delighted participation in life that he verges on parody. His 'Morning Verses' (*Novy Mir*, 1957, 4) begin with a chuckling rub-down with snow, the invocation of his muscles and dumb-bells, and the desire to make the girls look at him. He exults in his strange and powerful imagination, but, apparently setting it free, it conjures up little more than a young man in Paris ('like me! '), a woman in Mexico with a rose in her teeth, and a young Cypriot (also like him!) about to be shot by Englishmen. There is a suspicion of empty rhetoric when the poem ends assertively: 'I feel everything in the world, And everything in the world is all in me! ' It is indeed in range of imagination that Evtushenko is weak; his strength lies in the vivid re-creation of personal experience, as in the two poems mentioned above.

WHERE this personal experience has involved the poet closely with other people, these then become part of his intensely observed and keenly felt egocentric world. His shrewd eye and sympathetic heart perceive and re-create a subtle, tragi-comic, almost Chekhovian pathos in his poem 'By the Dnieper' (*Oktyabr*, 1955, 7). Visiting a couple who run a fruit-farm (and characteristically struck dumb by the wife's 'green eyes and violet lips'), the poet discovers that the wife is bored with her lot ('faithfulness and submission'), with her kind, staid husband and her peaceful, idyllic surroundings. 'How easy it is to live through one's time, And not notice life,' thinks the poet, sailing away on the busy steamer; no new notion for a poet, certainly, but evidently a thrilling discovery for Evgeny Evtushenko, and an effective, moving presentation of it for the reader.

With Evtushenko's thirst for experience, the poem of generalised reflection, as distinct from that derived immediately from narrated incident, is less common; but one of his attractive characteristics is a persistent dissatisfaction, not just with himself, but rather with the whole fragile conventional fabric of personal relations —the complement to his sometimes strident self-affirmation. Two striking short poems expressing this longing for natural sincerity, and weariness at the artificiality of human intercourse, are 'Integrity' (*Novy Mir*, 1956, 3), and the poem beginning 'This is what happens to me' published (startling contrast!) with the flamboyantly assertive 'Morning Verses' (*Novy Mir*, 1957, 4), and ending: 'O, how many nervous, unhealthy, unnecessary meetings, and unnecessary friendships! O, wise enlightenment, come to our aid and destroy the union of strangers and the separation of those who are near! '

The frankness of Evtushenko's poetry is especially noteworthy in another pair of juxtaposed poems (in *Novy Mir*, 1955, 7). The first, 'Envy,' presents all the awkwardness and feeling of inferiority of youth; the author imagines and envies his double, like him except that he is determined, able, and successful in everything. The second poem, however, defends his youthfulness against the condescension of his elders; he is aware of his rawness, but is struggling to develop, in his own way. Evtushenko sees clearly both the advantages and drawbacks of being young and talented; he is not always dazzled by himself, and he seldom affects an over-ripe wisdom.

Having selected a few short poems illustrating some of the main features of Evtushenko's verse, we must now turn to his major work, the longer poem (about twenty pages) 'Stantsiya Zima' (*Oktyabr*, 1956, 10).

Zima, Evtushenko's home, is a station on the Trans-Siberian railway, west of Lake Baikal and Irkutsk. In 'Stantsiya Zima' he returns to his old home at the age of twenty—that is, in 1953; the opening lines of the poem grip the attention immediately with their bold admission

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of personal confusion corresponding to the confusion of the country after Stalin's death (the latter is not named, but the implication is obvious):

The more grown-up we become, the franker . . .
Changes in life coincide with great changes in oneself . . .
At twenty, I've looked over everything again—
What I said but shouldn't have said,
What I didn't say but should have said.
I saw that I often lived timidly,
That I thought and felt and wanted little,
That in my too smooth life
Were more good intentions than deeds.

After recalling his forebears, settlers in Siberia (his great-grandfather had been exiled as a rebellious peasant), and dwelling on his largely carefree childhood, the poet resumes his contemporary theme, how 'Complexity suddenly came of itself, And really alarmed by it, I came to Zima'—to recover his balance in the simplicity of his childhood home.

But his first impressions are grim:

The obscene writing on a fence,
And a drunk stretched out by the pub,
And a quarrelling queue by the district store . . .
A driver cursed the town soviet . . .
The beggar's stumps banged on the stones,
An urchin chased after a cat with a stick . . .

At last he comes to his own people. He is fed and toasted mightily, but when his sister mentions Stalin's death, they all at once become serious, and his uncle holds forth:

So it turns out the doctors weren't guilty?
Then why have the people been treated like that?
It's a scandal before the whole of Europe . . .
Beria, the villain . . .

His uncle presses young Evtushenko, fresh from Moscow, to explain it all; but is put off by the youngster, who avoids answering: 'I'll explain later.'

Evtushenko spends the time lazily enjoying the countryside. By the river he meets an old friend of the family; the gruff old-timer takes up one of Evtushenko's persistent themes:

Young people were better before,
The Komsomol is deadly dull nowadays . . .
I remember your ma when she was seventeen . . .
I must say I'm worried,
You don't have their spirit . . .
And I don't see any young thoughts in you . . .
There are young people, but there's no youthfulness.

As an example the old grumbler cites his nephew, who, after election to the district committee, has acquired a metallic look and smooth eloquence, and has given up girls and football.

Tired of Evtushenko mooning about listlessly, his aunt persuades him to accompany her and some other women on a berry-picking expedition. Spending the night in a barn, he overhears one of the women pouring out her woes to a companion. She has a nice home ('aspidistras and a Dutch stove'), children, a husband who doesn't beat her and doesn't run after other women, he drinks of course, but who doesn't? But—when he comes home at night, drunk and growling:

And roughly turns me over and—silently, silently,
As though I wasn't a human being at all.
I remember I used to cry before and couldn't sleep,
But now I can go to sleep . . .
Everybody thinks I'm forty,
But, you know, I'm only thirty-five!
How can I go on? I've no strength left . . .
Ah, if only I had someone I loved,
How I'd care for him,
Even if he beat me, as long as he loved me!
I'd never dream of going out,
I'd take care of my looks,
I'd wash my darling's feet,
And afterwards I'd drink the water . . .

So far, Evtushenko has found in his home district little but disillusion and disappointment—no help for his numbed uneasiness. He soon leaves the berry-pickers and wanders alone in the woods and fields, asking the corn 'What to do, so that everyone should have happiness.' On the road he meets a dusty young boy full of indignation; in the collective farm, chairman Pankratov is doing nothing but wrong:

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I won't cringe.
I'll go. I'll find the truth.
If the bosses at Zima won't help,
I'll go to them at Irkutsk . . .

At that moment, who should drive up but Pankratov himself, armed with brief-case and threats, 'sitting in his jeep as in a presidium.' But Evtushenko feels respect for the barefooted boy, not for the blustering bureaucrat.

Home once more after the excursion, Evtushenko continues to roam the countryside and to think about people: now about his uncles, Volodya and Andrey—both of them colourful figures and local worthies, though of course Andrey is unfaithful to his wife and Volodya is a drunkard. Nauseated by the spectacle of his uncle after a drinking bout, Evtushenko begins to eat out.

In the eating-house he enters into conversation with a Moscow journalist, and pours out to him all his problems and reflections. The journalist responds cynically:

What is a writer now?
Not the sovereign of thoughts, but their watchdog.
Yes, changes, yes, but behind the speeches
There's some shady game.
We chatter about what yesterday we kept quiet,
We keep quiet about what we did yesterday . . .

This is the most politically provocative statement in the poem; but Evtushenko declares his disgust at the cynic's 'bilious unbelief,' and dissociates himself from it.

However, a further impulse towards clarification of his thoughts comes when he goes with his uncles to a show given by a juggler and conjuror, whose hackneyed performance is crowned by the dove of peace on his handkerchief. The worthy uncles are thrilled; Evtushenko reflects:

How much of that sort of thing I've seen!
So many ancient tricks I've seen,
Just staged in a new and expensive way,
At how many shows like that
I've clapped, a little, with the others.
I've seen so many decorated spoons,
When there was nothing to make soup of,
And I thought about the true and the false,
About the change of truth into falsehood . . .
We're all guilty . . .
Of empty verses and countless quotations,
And standard ending of speeches . . .
There are two kinds of love.
Some flatter those they love,
However grievous the offence may be,
They forgive and don't even want to think.
We have suffered so much belated exasperation
In recent days.
We don't need blind love to-day,
But thoughtful, scrutinising love!
Let's think about great and small,
So as to live profoundly, not just anyhow . . .

The end of Evtushenko's stay at Zima approaches; he imagines Zima making him a parting speech. The distant provincial place—nevertheless thinking, it also, about the age—sends him back into the wide world to continue his proud, passionate search, and the poem ends on this soberly hopeful note.

The gradual change of mood in the poem—the modification of nervous irritability into calmer reflection—is contrived with care and some subtlety. Obviously the poet has benefited from his holiday in the country; but as well as the fields, woods and rivers, human contacts have helped to restore his equilibrium. People suffer personal unhappiness, they are politically bewildered; at the same time they have strong feelings of righteousness and justice. The bureaucrat is opposed by the barefooted boy with his burning indignation. Bitter cynicism is rejected, but the poet insists on his right to look beneath façades, to see through ancient tricks, to refuse to be put off with decorated spoons when there is nothing to make soup with.

LIKE angry young men everywhere, Evtushenko is vague about everything he wants ('that everyone should have happiness'); but one demand seems to sum up the poem: 'We don't need blind love to-day, But thoughtful, scrutinising love!' There is no suggestion of a fundamental challenge to the regime, but there is a determination that the system shall

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live up to its claims, and no longer depend on deception and bullying. It must be emphasised that Evtushenko's return home did not lead to dissolving his disquiet in a mere rosy optimism. As he wrote in a short poem published a month later (in *Novy Mir*, 1956, 11), 'Hastening to travel away, We do not forget the troubles of the age, We cannot get away from our thoughts, As we cannot get away from ourselves.'

'Stantsiya Zima' appeared in the autumn of 1956, that lively period, on the eve of the Hungarian revolution, when the controversial works of Dudintsev, Kirsanov, Granin and Yashin were published. In the harsher atmosphere of 1957, Evtushenko was sometimes the target of criticism along with them, though much was forgiven him on account of his youth. Typical was an article by V. Pankov in *Znamya* (1957, 7). Quoting from the short poem 'Two Loves' (*Novy Mir*, 1955, 12), where the poet indicated the Revolution's 'wrinkles—from betrayals, hesitations, and losses,' but nevertheless fell on his knees before his 'two loves' (the Revolution and a woman), the critic asks crossly: 'Whence and why this Christian ritual . . .? It is not in the character of Soviet poets to substitute tearfully sentimental lamentations for manly directness. . . . The author lacks true tempering by life and the real school of labour. . . .'

Evtushenko's youth and inexperience are heavily emphasised; Pankov suspects in him a frivolous, captious idler, and is disgusted that when Evtushenko was roaming the countryside around Zima 'it never occurred to him to take hold of the controls of a combine-harvester or the wheel of a lorry, or a rake or a scythe or a fork. . . . Evtushenko has not yet come to the portrayal of the heroism of labour. He is young, so that is understandable. What is bad is that one has the impression that he is not trying to find that school' (of labour).

This and much other knuckle-rapping administered by critics and the Komsomol may have made some impression on Evtushenko. A striking poem published at the end of last year, 'Russia' (*Novy Mir*, 1957, 12), is a hymn glorifying constructive labour and asserting his own pride in such work as chopping wood. This, and more, he declares, his country has taught him; and to be stubborn and faithful, but modest—to be friends with all good men, Pole or Uzbek, Jew or Arab, American or French. The poem ends with renewed insistence on his 'building and ploughing,' living and dying as a 'working Russian man'—and with a typical final touch of bravado, he thanks Russia for all this and also for 'the books that I shall write'! This is in marked contrast to the country rambles of 'Stantsiya Zima' and to the erotic day-dreaming (while others dig!) of the first poem mentioned in this article.

In another poem, 'Partisan Graves' (*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 12 October 1957), he is once more rambling through the forest near Zima; but now he comes across a monument erected in honour of partisans who fell in the Civil War, and is suitably moved and inspired:

I have still to seek and suffer.
The world awaits me, my struggles and my courage.
The world with the song of birds and the shine of wet leaves,
With its triumphant immortality,
The world, where the living think of the dead
And the dead help the living.

However, Evtushenko is still a convenient target for the literary pundits. His fourth book of poetry, recently published, provided ammunition for a weighty half-page article ('Without Precise Positions,' by V. Soloukhin, in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 8 April 1958). This critic regrets that the anti-American pugnacity in an early poem by Evtushenko, written in 1952, seems to have been replaced in his recent work by a pugnacious attitude towards his personal and literary foes, and quotes a poem expressing an almost Byronic scorn of critics and slanderers, a savage joy in laughing in the face of enemies. 'Having lost the awareness of the real foe, Evtushenko has surrounded himself with imagined literary enemies, and here he is, enjoying laughing in their faces.'

'And what,' continues the critic, 'what concern is that of a miner from the Donbass, a builder of the Kuibyshev hydro-electric station, the creators of the earth satellite, or the peasant Kuzma Baklanikhin from our village?'

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After ponderously bludgeoning Evtushenko for his egotism, his admission that he is full of contradictions and confusion, the critic concludes by commenting on a few lines of great interest and no little pathos:

Frontiers hinder me . . .
It is embarrassing to me
Not to know Buenos Aires
And New York.
I want to wander, as much as I need, in London,
To talk with everybody, even brokenly!
Hanging on a bus like a boy,
I want to ride through Paris in the morning!
I want art to be different, like me!

The critic scornfully compares this 'omnivorous touristic superficiality' with the ideological militancy of Mayakovsky when he travelled abroad. 'In the middle of the twentieth century it is not enough simply to love life. One must fight for it too, and in this struggle it is important to know who is your real friend and who is your real enemy.'

So Evtushenko is not out of the wood yet. After the drubbing he has had from the watchdogs, no-one but a watchdog would affect surprise that a note of personal bitterness has entered his poetry and that frontiers hinder him.

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VINCENT SEVARIUS is the pen-name of a Hungarian writer who left Hungary after the defeat of the revolution. He spent five and a half years in goal in Hungary as one of the accused in the Rajk trials.

We regret that owing to an unfortunate oversight the name of JOHN N. WASHBURN *was omitted from the contributors' list in our last issue.* MR. WASHBURN *is a graduate of the Russian Institute of Columbia University and a former instructor in Russian language and literature at Dartmouth College (New Hampshire).*

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(*Continued from page two of cover*)

D. Nutter, E. Chamberlain, and in Britain by Joan Robinson and other defenders of capitalism . . .' (*Kommunist*, 1958, 8).

Barrington Moore Jr.

'Barrington Moore has devoted his book to an investigation of the mythical "contradictions" between Marxist-Leninist theory and the practical activity of the Soviet government . . . In order to show the "non-socialist" character of Soviet society, bourgeois historians as a rule slander Soviet democracy and the leading rôle of the Communist party. In the majority of such "investigations" it is simply asserted that there is no political freedom in the USSR and that the Soviet régime is non-democratic . . . With a complete lack of humour, the most rabid enemies of the socialist state pretend that they are "defending" it; they accuse the party of replacing the dictatorship of the proletariat by its own dictatorship; they even pretend that they are "defending" the party from its leaders, who are accused of dominating the party. While reading Moore's book, one is unwittingly reminded of the futile attempts of the counter-revolutionaries (in 1921) to oppose the Soviets to the Bolshevik party. Thirty years later, Moore is still occupied with the same topic . . .' (*Voprosy Istorii*, 1958, 4).

R. A. Bauer, A. Inkeles, C. Kluckhohn

'The authors of the works published by the Russian Research Center try to avoid the use, as source material, of documents and literature published in the Soviet Union. This is particularly true of the book by Bauer, Inkeles, and Kluckhohn, *How the Soviet system works*. In 1950-51 the Russian Research Center conducted a survey among displaced persons on the orders and with funds from the American Air Force. The evidence received by the American authorities from the frightened people or traitors was then "analysed" by these authors in collaboration with American military specialists and the staff of the not unknown Munich Institute. The result is a hundred per cent slander of the USSR . . . The falsifiers of the history of the USSR are zealously serving the interests of the imperialists, and for that reason they have unlimited means . . .' (*Voprosy Istorii*, 1958, 4).

Walter Kolarz and Olaf Caroe

'One of the most important proofs of the democratic character of the Soviet system is the solution of national problems in our country . . . In the period of the disintegration of the colonial system bourgeois writers turn with new energy to the thankless task of minimising our successes in the development of the Soviet national republics . . . Examples of complete slander, without even any pretensions to objectivity, are the volumes by the journalist W. Kolarz and the former official of the British colonial administration in India, Olaf Caroe, who apparently has not forgotten the Curzon tradition. The very titles of these books —*Russia and her Colonies* and *The Soviet Empire*—indicate their contents. The authors could not give their books even the appearance of a scientific character . . .' (*Voprosy Istorii*, 1958, 4).

D. R. Hodgman

'The work of the American economist D. Hodgman about the industrial production of the USSR has a very special character. He supports his conclusions by various statistical calculations, but the scientific form cannot hide the baselessness of his opinions. Hodgman doubts the trustworthiness of Soviet statistical data, and reduces the achievements of Soviet industry by approximately half. But even after such an operation the figures seem too impressive to him, and he tries to belittle their importance. In addition to the usual assertions about the "high cost" of our industrial successes, he maintains that they are only the result of the application of foreign technical and organisational methods to the large human and natural resources of the Soviet state . . .' (*Voprosy Istorii*, 1958, 4).

Karl Jaspers

'His autobiography is the final proof, provided by himself, of the utter inadequacy of his philosophising. Up to now it has only been possible to interpret him from the outside. Now he has himself given an interpretation: "Only when I became deeply immersed in politics did my philosophy reach full consciousness, down to the basis of metaphysics." But his politics do not differ from the ideas traditional among the bourgeoisie from the beginning, ideas designed to support hostility to the workers. Whoever despises the masses does not love mankind. And whoever, like Jaspers, considers surrendering politics to the irrational, will land in the blackest swamp of reaction, among people to whom the woe or welfare of mankind is a matter of complete indifference. It is after all no accident that since 1945 Jaspers has so persistently presented, in the German tongue, the ideological message of American imperialism . . .' (*Deutsche Zeitschrift fuer Philosophie*, 1958, 2).

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